



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

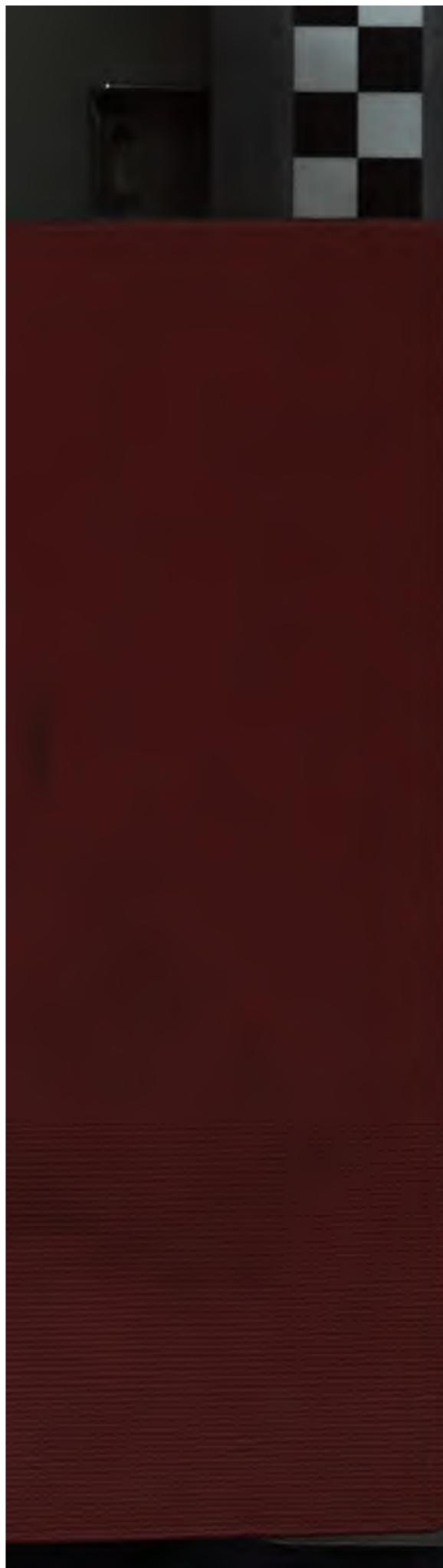
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

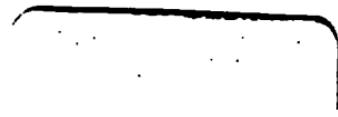
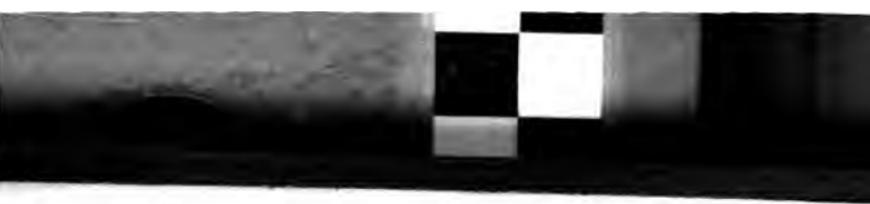
We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>





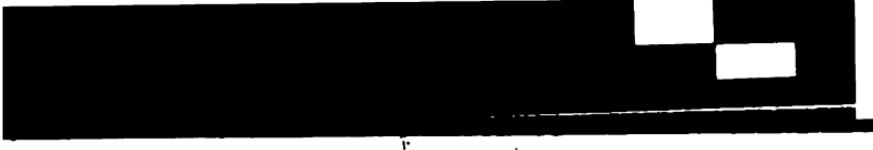


NBO
Holmes









THE MAID OF HONOR



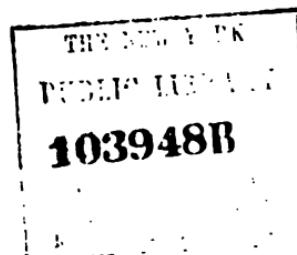
The Maid of Honor

BY
RICHARD S. HOLMES



NEW YORK CHICAGO TORONTO
Fleming H. Revell Company
LONDON AND EDINBURGH

Copyright, 1907, by
FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY



SECOND EDITION



New York : 158 Fifth Avenue
Chicago : 80 Wabash Avenue
Toronto : 25 Richmond St., W.
London : 21 Paternoster Square
Edinburgh : 100 Princes Street

808
1908
1
2
3
4
5
6

CONTENTS

I.	A WEDDING AT ST. DAVID'S	7
II.	I MAKE AN ACQUAINTANCE	22
III.	A LETTER FROM NEW ORLEANS	35
IV.	A HOPELESS CASE	42
V.	TIM GIVES ME AN OUTING	55
VI.	AN UNEXPECTED GUEST	67
VII.	WENDELL'S QUEER DAY	80
VIII.	MY JABBOK	89
IX.	NO BLESSING SUNDAY	99
X.	HENDERSON RETURNS TO HIS OWN COUNTRY BY ANOTHER WAY	111
XI.	JOE SURPRISES ME	121
XII.	WHICH RECORDS TWO JOURNEYS	134
XIII.	ON SHIPBOARD	144
XIV.	ON FOREIGN SHORES	158
XV.	THE BUMMERS' CLUB	171
XVI.	I VISIT DUQUEBORO	188
XVII.	I LEARN MORE ABOUT LEWIS JORDAN	205
XVIII.	RED HEADLINES	215
XIX.	TOM	229
XX.	JULIA BECOMES MY CHAMPION	238
XXI.	JIM GARVEY REAPPEARS	247
XXII.	THREE LETTERS	257
XXIII.	ON THE THRESHOLD AT DUQUEBORO	271
XXIV.	GRANDVIEW ONCE MORE	279
XXV.	PERIL SURPRISES LOVE	289

CONTENTS

XXVI.	LOVE'S CONFESSION	306
XXVII.	A VISIT TO OLD FRIENDS	313
XXVIII.	AN AWFUL NIGHT	321
XXIX.	AT MY ALMA MATER	336
XXX.	THE GREENTON CENTENNIAL	342
XXXI.	HENDERSON'S LAST DAYS	352
XXXII.	HENDERSON'S WILL	366

The Maid of Honor

I

A WEDDING AT ST. DAVID'S

HERE was to be a wedding at old St. David's, and I was to be the best man. The groom and I had been classmates in college, members of the same fraternity, and roommates for the better part of four years. The day of graduation, which means separation, had come to us as it does to all college boys. We smoked our parting pipe in the fraternity lodge room, sang the song of "The Girl I Left Behind Me," and turned our faces toward the future with the hope that destiny would bring to view the faces of other girls, of whom one for each of us would not be left behind.

Two men could not well have been more unlike than were Harry Sinclair and I. He was of less than medium height, with round, full face, and light-brown hair which was a fine setting for a florid complexion. His eyes and mouth betokened one who would take what came in daily life, but who would vastly prefer to choose for himself what daily life should bring. He was an easy-going, good-natured man who could be strong and stern when occasion arose. Of course, in college he was popular.

We had each chosen the ministry for a life work, and this caused our separation; for Harry was an

Episcopalian and went to Philadelphia to the divinity school, while I, being a Congregationalist, made my way to Andover. Harry's suave manner and genial disposition made him easily the faculty's first favorite, and when at his graduation the parish of old St. David's was without a rector, seminary influence at once placed him there as incumbent. Harry considered that great good fortune.

The outcome of my seminary life was as happy. The Presbyterian church of my native city called me at once, and the installation occurred within a month of my graduation. And now five years had passed, and Harry Sinclair had called me to be best man, as he took, at the altar, that other girl for whom he had hoped so sentimentally, years before. The rector of old St. David's was to be married in his own church.

Two days before the wedding found me in Paoli, where Sinclair lived in his bachelor abode. He had planned, for the afternoon, a visit to the church and a call upon the bride-elect and her maid of honor, who were the guests of the Waynes of the day, at the old Wayne Mansion, which stood almost as in the days of "Mad Anthony." The bride was a relative of the Waynes, and had very romantic notions about her kinsman, the great General of the Revolution. So, though her home was in Virginia, she had asked the privilege of being married in the old church, and of having her wedding dinner in the room where the chivalrous Anthony was born.

Of course St. David's was the first object of interest for Harry to point out to his guest, and we made the five miles in the early afternoon at a rapid canter. The quaint little church, one of the few surviving



things of which we Northerners may be proud, stood just where the fathers placed it two hundred years ago. It had suffered no change. Watchful eyes and faithful hands had kept even the tooth of time from harming it. On a sequestered country road, behind and among enveloping hills, shaded by old trees, low-built, with ivy clambering over it, with a strong stone wall standing guard between the churchyard and the highway, and with the graves of the dead of almost two centuries coming close up around its always open door—so stood St. David's, built sixty years before the American Revolution.

But beautiful as was the exterior, its charm was lost when once the interior was seen. That was so small, so quaint, so staid, so perfect. It was only a miniature as compared with churches of to-day: but the miniature was altogether fascinating. The great Bible on the lectern looked too large to have been carried in at the little door. The room was almost square. From the entrance door on the side ran an aisle, straight across to the wall beyond, where the baptismal font was placed. A longer aisle extended from the rear to the altar space, so the cross aisles formed four blocks of corner pews. Six pews were in each block—pews of the old colonial type, white, with round brown rails at the top, and little doors that shut and buttoned fast upon the worshipers. I found myself calculating how many persons the church would hold, and wondering how many were invited. Four corners full of pews, each corner holding six, and each one of the six pews capable of seating five guests. Four sixes were twenty-four, and twenty-four fives were one hundred and twenty. Finally I called out in the stillness:

"Harry, how many bids for this affair of yours and Phyllis's?"

"A hundred and twenty: Phyllis attended to all that. She came over here and counted. She wants the place just full, not a vacant seat, not a guest too many."

"She's methodical, isn't she? She invites to a nicety. She'll make you account for the pennies, by and by, boy. And you needn't fume when that time comes, and say you don't know where those winged pennies go. She'll make you tell."

We talked about how to walk in, and how to walk out, and where each should stand, and how the ring should be given, and whether the best man should walk out with the maid of honor, just as if we had anything at all to say about that, and just as if neither of us had ever seen a marriage ceremony. We both agreed that we never had seen such a one as this was to be. After that, we passed outside to look at the graves. That old burying-ground had a history. If it could talk, what a thrilling story it could tell. Ivy crept over the marble slabs, and myrtle ran everywhere among the graves. I walked away from my companion, and my thoughts were summoning historic forms from the past as I read the inscriptions on the old stones. Turning back to Harry I said:

"Harry, this makes me feel as Hamlet must have felt when with Horatio he wandered in the ancient burying-ground in Denmark. All it lacks is the open grave, the digger, the song, and the skull."

"That's all so," Harry answered. "But we can't stop. Never mind the song; never mind the skull. It's mount and away. There's more to show you, and we must be at the Wayne Mansion in an hour."

Over the hills we galloped until we came to old Paoli battle-field, and dismounted where the monument stands that commemorates the event.

In the open field close by, a picnic was in progress, and men and boys of various ages, mixed together incongruously, were playing baseball. I watched the game for a moment, and then turned back to the small marble shaft, and began once more to read the inscription. While so engaged, and trying to get into spiritual touch with the past, I felt rather than saw one of the men from the picnic approach. With no hesitation he said :

" Interested in history, I see."

" Yes, greatly," I replied.

" Then of course you know all about the Paoli massacre."

I was ashamed to confess myself ignorant of any point of my country's history, but there was no other way ; and I answered, " No, I know nothing about it, save what is written on this stone."

He then told me the tragic story of Wayne's defeat by General Gray : how Wayne had planned to surprise the British commander, and had himself been surprised and routed through the treachery of his Tory countrymen.

" Were there many Tories here ? " I asked.

" Many ? " he questioned in reply. " Yes, too many. Old St. David's was Church of England Episcopalian, and many of its men were Tories. Pity that church hadn't been Presbyterian. The Presbyterians were patriots, every last man of them. There was not a Presbyterian Tory in the whole province."

Sinclair had taken no part in the conversation, but he winced at that, and colored, and knowing as I did

his every mood, I feared a sudden flame of wrath. Before he could say a word, I broke in with the eager question :

“ Are you a Presbyterian, then ? ”

“ Yes, sir, that’s what I am—a Presbyterian preacher ; Westminster Confession of Faith Presbyterian preacher.”

“ May I ask your name ? ”

“ Why not ? ” said he. “ I’m always glad to tell my name. I am Chalfant Fraser, at your service. And you ? ”

I gave my name, and asked, “ Is your church near here ? ”

“ Yonder in Malvern. These are the favorite grounds for our young people for picnics, and I like to have them come here. I tell them these grounds are the campus of Liberty College, and the trees sing patriotic songs when the wind blows high.”

“ So you’re a Presbyterian preacher ? Well, that makes two of us,” I answered, “ for I am a Presbyterian preacher, too. My friend here is the rector of old St. David’s. But he’s no Tory. He’s a patriot. He’s going to be married to one of the old General’s kinswomen, the day after to-morrow.”

Straight over to Sinclair the preacher walked. “ So you are Mr. Sinclair ? I have never met you before, but I know all about you. Will you take my hand ? I didn’t mean any offense : facts are facts, we cannot dodge that. But I wouldn’t have said what I did, had I known, and I ask your pardon.”

Then Sinclair did one of those handsome things which always made him popular with men. He stepped quickly nearer, grasped the stranger’s hand, and with a good strong shake said, “ Take your

A WEDDING AT ST. DAVID'S 13

hand? Well, I should say so. Why shouldn't I? Probably I've no business to be an Episcopalian. But though I am, I'm no Tory, but a patriot: every inch of me a patriot."

Upon that I interrupted saying, "Harry, let me make you acquainted with our new friend. This is the Rev. Chalfant Fraser of Malvern, and your neighbor." Then Harry's whole manner changed. "Fraser: Fraser?" he replied. "Why, that's the name of one of Phyllis's ushers. Is he a relative of yours?"

"Yes, he's my son," was the reply.

"Is that so?" said Harry. "Now, this is fine. I haven't seen your son yet, but he'll be all right, I know."

"Yes, he'll be all right: so I think. He arrives home to-night. He's in business in Newark, New Jersey. He's an old beau of Phyllis's, but she dropped him when you came into the field."

There was a moment's pause. Then Mr. Fraser, stepping back and eying Harry, said, "So you are to marry Phyllis Lorraine? Well, I congratulate you, for I know her. The whole Union can't beat her. And if she were here I'd congratulate her too." And Harry, with a last shake of the man's hand, which he still held, answered, "Right you are, my friend. The whole Union can't beat her; no, nor the Union and Dominion joined. She's the finest, the very finest——"

"Boots and saddles, Harry!" I cried, almost at the top of my voice. "You nipped my sentiment in the churchyard, I'll nip yours here. The gloaming's coming: white sails wait in the offing, and there's a day after to-morrow for you, and perhaps a to-night for

me; for I have not yet seen Phyllis, and that other, that maid of honor girl—perhaps she is for me, who knows?"

We mounted and rode slowly down the bridle path toward the highway.

The dusk of a September day was settling down when I first saw Phyllis Lorraine. She had been expecting us, had seen us approaching, and stood waiting in the wide hall of the Wayne Mansion. The lamp-light fell softly on her face and figure, showing both in the loveliest way.

They were very unlike, Harry and Phyllis. He was Saxon, and she was southern. The stream that darkens the cheek, and makes the indescribable complexion that we call "brunette," had been poured into her life from some ancestral spring. "Brunette," "little brown," is just the word to describe her. Glowing she was, and rosy, but the rosiness was softened by the brown. She was tall, but not very tall; she moved as southern girls always move, with a grace that makes you wonder. As she came forward to meet us, her red-brown cheeks glowed, and her eyes kindled with welcome.

"So this is Harry's chum? I've heard all about you. I know you perfectly. I give you welcome, though this is not my home. This was my kinsman's home, General Wayne, and he is welcoming you in my words. But you must have been far around, for you are late."

I listened to her voice in rapt fascination, never having heard a southern girl speak before, and that liquid, indescribable sound with which she had just said "around" had captured me. No one can say "ou" as the southern girl does, and as I heard it now

for the first time, I said to myself, "I wish she would say 'around,' and 'about,' and 'sound,' and any other word with 'ou' in it, for an hour. It equals any song." But to stand in dumb show, admiring, was impossible, and I said, as any country gentleman would, "Our ride has been long, but I have enjoyed it greatly, Miss Lorraine. I have seen some things I shall not forget; not the least of them is the little church in the ingleside. But had I known the pleasure that awaited me here, I would have made Harry hasten."

"Oh, you northern men are all alike," she retorted. "You love to be gallant in speech. But you are right about the little church. It is a dear, isn't it?"

"That it is," was my answer. "I would like to be married there myself."

Upon that she turned to Harry, and said, "Do you know how late you two men are?" But ere Harry could reply, a man who had come in added:

"Yes, Sinclair, you are late. And I've come in to ask you and your friend to stay to tea." Whereupon Harry introduced me to Mr. Wayne. After a salutation, he proceeded, "Come, gentlemen, Phyllis will excuse you while you put off the dust of your ride, and tea will be ready presently." He led the way to the stairs, Phyllis calling after us, "Now, hasten, Harry. I want your friend to see the rest of the family before tea is served. Yes—and Harry, he has not seen my maid of honor."

When Sinclair and I came down the broad stairs, the family and guests were waiting in the hall. From those stairs I had my first sight of the maid of honor. My heart almost stopped beating at sight of that girl. As I had gone up the stairs, I had thought of nothing

but the beauty of Phyllis Lorraine and Harry's good fortune. As I came down, I thought of nothing but the vision of beauty standing by Phyllis's side. Mechanically I heard and saw myself presented to the members of the Wayne family. What sort of responses I made to their greetings I never knew. But Phyllis recalled me to myself in a moment, as she said, "And now let me present you to my very dear friend, my maid of honor. Will you escort her in to tea?"

Upon that, I came to myself, and bowing said, "May I have that honor?" With a graceful movement of her head, but without looking at me, she answered, "Thank you," and took my offered arm.

How that tea-time passed, I never quite knew. The woman by my side had robbed me of my customary power to talk. Harry and Miss Lorraine sat opposite, and the stream of conversation ran on cheerily; but my words were not making even a little eddy in the surface, and I was conscious that the maid of honor was in the most lady-like way ignoring me. But there was one compensation: my mind was busy with the picture she had made as she stood in the hall while I came down the stairs. It was a lovely picture. Tall, almost as tall as I; straight, graceful, in perfect poise; fair, with hair the color of the smoke-tree blossom in my home dooryard; her complexion clear, auroral, tinted like the sky in an early cloudless morning, neither pale nor rosy, but a blending of the white and red such as no brush could paint; and faultlessly dressed, though in the utmost simplicity, she had stood there like a queen. The girls had been busy with some of the wedding preliminaries, and the work was

not yet all done. Phyllis was so informal that she kept on her work apron, nor would she allow her friend to lay hers aside.

So the maid of honor, wearing a plain but perfectly fitting black gown and a long apron, had met the best man and accepted his escort. But the impression that apron had made was to endure for all time. It was pink, of a shade so nearly like the light in her face that, had the two met, no one could have told where either ended or the other began. I never had known before that black and pink could make so becoming a costume. That vision was my undoing. I tried to talk, but I was thinking of the maid of honor. When tea was over, and Mr. Wayne took me about the old house, I could not tell what we saw, nor where we went. I was thinking of the maid of honor. Phyllis showed me the room where the General was born, and where her wedding dinner would be served, but I took little heed. I was thinking of the maid of honor. I think no man ever made a worse guy of himself. Of course that would not do, so I pulled myself together after a while and acted as a guest, who wished to make a good impression upon all, should act; but the maid of honor was absolutely unresponsive to my every advance. The girl and the man had even so soon formed opinions of each other which probably neither would have had the other know. I knew both; I loved her, and she regarded me with aversion.

It was half-past twelve o'clock when Harry and I were back in the den at Paoli. I was very ill at ease, because of the manifest attitude toward me of that girl. I knew perfectly well that she had drawn her-

self away from me before supper was ended, and I chafed under my failure to please her.

Harry would smoke before he went to bed, and I joined him, though I was no great smoker, and was thinking of other things than those which the Indian weed is apt to conjure up.

“Isn’t she great?” said Harry.

“Yes,” I answered.

“Isn’t the man lucky that gets her?”

“Yes.”

“Isn’t she the handsomest woman you ever saw?”

“Yes.”

“Isn’t she just Venus, and Helen of Troy, and Dido of Carthage, and Parthenia, and all the rest?”

“Yes.”

“What would you give to be in my place, old fellow?”

“Not one red cent.”

“What! and she all that?”

“Yes, just because she is all that.”

“And you wouldn’t take my place because she is all that?”

“No, I wouldn’t, and just because she is all that.”

“Don’t you admire beauty?”

“Yes, I do.”

“Wouldn’t you like to have the handsomest woman in the world for your wife?”

“Yes, I would.”

“And yet you wouldn’t take my place?”

“No, I wouldn’t.”

“Look here, old man, what’s the matter with you?”

“Nothing’s the matter with me. I’m sleepy, and this cigar is too strong for me. I knew it was when I took it. Let’s go to bed.”

We rehearsed at St. David's Church next day. Harry and I rode over to the Wayne Mansion, and then acted as escorts for the carriages that took the remainder of the party to the church. The Bishop of the diocese was to perform the ceremony for his young rector, but he would not come out to St. David's for any rehearsal. He wrote, "Arrange matters as you please. I will be there; I know how to do my part."

At the church we found the two ushers waiting. Harry knew one of them as he was his choice, but Phyllis had insisted that she be allowed to choose the other. "It is not conventional, I know," she had said, "but I want Bruce Fraser. He's a good friend of mine." So Phyllis had her way.

I was more interested in Bruce Fraser than I would have been but for the pleasant meeting with his father. I could see at once why Mr. Fraser had said Bruce was all right. He did look so. He was tall and well built, very fair, with light wavy hair, blue eyes and a melodious voice. But there was something about his lips that I did not like. It did not take a second for me to see that he was interested in the maid of honor. That thought was confirmed before the rehearsal was over, and there came to me a presentiment that there would be trouble between him and me sometime.

The little company gathered at the gate by the roadside, for the procession was to start from the carriages. Unique, and unlike any wedding procession I had ever seen, was that one. I went first on the arm of an usher, and next came Harry in the same way. After him walked the maid of honor alone, and last of all the bride-elect, escorted by her father. Phyllis had planned all. She had a genius for doing unusual

things just as if they were as common as air. Thus it happened that I reached my place at the altar first, and from that point of vantage watched the rest. On they came, but after the first glance my whole attention was given to the maid of honor. She was as erect and graceful as the fabled queen of beauty, and I blessed the man who built that church, and made it possible for me to see such loveliness unchallenged.

I acted as Bishop's dummy in the rehearsal, reading from the prayer-book as well as I could with one eye on the book, and the other on—well, not on Phyllis Lorraine. It all went well enough until the return march. Then I, longing to have that lovely girl on my arm once more, said :

“Let's make this a compact, three-couple affair, as we go out. It will be much more symmetrical than for one couple to lead and four singles to go trailing along behind. Three men, one by one, look too much like funkeys.”

Phyllis clapped her hands, and cried, “Oh, yes : that will be lovely. That's just what I want.”

Then Harry's usher said, “Why, yes : I think that will be *au fait*.”

Bruce Fraser said nothing, but I saw him and the maid of honor exchange glances, and then that lady spoke. “If there were three or four bridesmaids, and three or four ushers, and presenting arms, as the soldiers say, were the order for all, it would be well enough. But as it is, I think Phyllis and Mr. Sinclair, the Princess and her Prince, should be followed by us all singly and in courtier-like humility.”

That was all she said, but the matter was settled. For once Phyllis was not to have her way, and I saw what none of the rest did : a light in the eye of

that maid of honor which looked as if it might have been flashed from an iceberg. Yet below her eyes her face was covered with a smile. Glancing the next instant at Bruce Fraser, I saw an answering smile just vanishing from his face. The best man had been snubbed by the maid of honor, and he knew it; he resolved not to incur another snub during those wedding days.

The wedding was a success. The Bishop, berobed and august, officiated. The one hundred and twenty guests gathered from far and wide. The little organ made such music as its possibilities permitted. Harry was solemn. Phyllis was radiant. The maid of honor looked like a queen. As the wedding procession passed from the church, Phyllis led the way to General Wayne's tomb, and tore apart her wedding bouquet, strewing its flowers about the base of the shaft that marked her great kinsman's grave. Then back the procession went to the old Wayne Mansion, to congratulations, to the wedding dinner, to adieus, and to separation. The wedding at St. David's was over.

II

I MAKE AN ACQUAINTANCE

THE train for New York was ready when I reached the station. I was hurrying toward the only parlor car, when my eyes caught sight of the maid of honor just entering it. She paused a moment, to say "good-bye" to Mr. Lorraine, Phyllis's father, and as I was in no mood to meet either of them, I went into the coach at hand.

The brief sight of Mr. Lorraine called vividly to mind the only thing I had not liked about the wedding party. That was the punchbowl under the stairs. It was one of the insignia of the fashionable circles of the great cities which the country parson could not abide. To my great surprise, Mr. Lorraine, who was in all externals an elegant gentleman, paid too much court to the punchbowl, and with him always seemed to be young Fraser, the usher. When the latter bade his hosts good-night, he was unmistakably the worse for liquor. I saw him when he said adieu to my lady. There was a sentence or two that appeared almost confidential, to my watchful eyes, and then she said more audibly :

"And you won't forget what I told you, will you?"

"No, I won't. I couldn't; 'pon my word, I couldn't."

"You'd better not," she said, and he was gone. My parting with her had been very different, and was too fresh in memory to make me care for the exchange

of a word with her. I had been the last guest to leave the Wayne Mansion, and when the adieus had been made to my good hosts, I had said to the maid of honor :

“ These last two days have been varied and happy.”

“ Indeed they have,” said she. “ Good-night.”

Almost any man in his senses would have understood that, and have gone without another word. But I was madly in love. In all those days, where this girl lived had not been mentioned, and I intended to ask her at parting.

So I kept on, “ We have had a part not soon to be forgotten, in a lovely festivity.”

“ Yes. Good-bye,” she answered, and her manner would have done credit to Lord Chesterfield. I blundered on.

“ You will be going home soon, I suppose : to-morrow, perhaps ? ”

“ Yes, to-morrow, perhaps,” said she, with studied emphasis of my words. And she added for the third time, “ Good-bye.”

Then I comprehended that it was time to go, and with such dignity and hauteur as I could assume, I said, “ The best man says farewell, his last farewell, to the maid of honor, and thanks her for the pleasure she has conferred in a festal hour.”

And she answered, just as she had already, without a change of tone, without a modulation of the note she had first struck, “ Thank you. Good-bye.”

If you have ever been in love, you do not need to have me tell you that the hours I had passed since that last “ good-bye ” until I saw her enter the parlor car had not been wholly unperturbed, and as I went into the coach, that last glimpse of her put my brain

in a whirl. She was entrancingly beautiful. I loved her, and I was losing her forever. I could have written to ask Harry where her home was, but that would have been to tell him my secret, and perhaps my sorrow, and I would not have him know either. He would tell Phyllis, and she would tell the girl, and that must never be, if it could be possibly prevented.

There is a friend of mine who is accustomed to say, "God helps the man who can't help himself." The saying was proved true that afternoon. How much I might have moped and droned, I know not, had it not been for what happened. The train was full to the doors. I went through car after car without finding a seat. In the last car I came upon one in which there was only one passenger, and his appearance was not particularly inviting. But it was my only chance, and I dropped into the vacant place timidly, as if I had no right there.

Little by little I settled into the place, and began to take account of my seat companion. He was holding a large, flexible-covered Bible, a pad of paper, and a pencil, and was deeply engrossed, reading and note-making. I began to watch him, at first stealthily, then, seeing how preoccupied he was, more boldly, and finally rather more closely, probably, than politeness would have allowed; when to my great surprise he turned squarely upon me, saying:

"Ye want to know what I am doin', I doot. I don't mind tellin' ye. I've been havin' a discussion wi' some friends o' mine, who think I don't know what releegion is. I do. But I want to get masel' fortified. I want the bottom facts. Ye don't know me, but I'll tell ye the kind o' man I am. I'm a very releegious man.

I'm probably more religeious than any o' the people o' my acquaintance, and I'm probably more religeious than yoursel'."

Those were the first words David Henderson ever spoke to me. In them, he introduced himself, and the introduction was perfect. As the years passed by, I came to know him well; how well, it is part of the business of this story to relate.

Two things were very clear: the man was Scotch, and he wanted to talk. He had flung out his last remark like a challenge, and I knew if I took up the gauntlet, there would be a discussion on religion. A Scotchman may be as reticent as a crab about ordinary things, but he is like the war-horse that snuffeth the battle afar off and paweth in the valley when he sees an opening for discussion about religion. But I welcomed the challenge, and replied:

"You may be more religious than I. But I ought to be fairly religious, being a preacher of the gospel."

His answer was a staggerer.

"I would be thinkin' so. Ye look half-scared and uncertain, as most preachers do. Ye droppit into this seat, half o' which was yours by right, as if ye were a thief, takin' what didna belong to ye. Ye sat doon wi' aboot half your weight on the seat, balancin' the rest o' yoursel' on your legs, and ye held yoursel' thegither as if ye were afraid to touch me, lest ye might catch somethin'. Why, man, I am no dangerous," he went on, noticing not at all that I hardly knew whether to be amused or indignant at this frank personal comment. "Then," he continued, "ye began to squint at ma buik, juist like a preacher or a woman. Ye had no business to, but ye were so curious, ye couldna help it. So I sized ye up. I saw ye werena

a woman, and I concluded ye must be a preacher, for naebody else would act so much like a woman. But all the same, I know I am more releeigious than ye."

I saw that he thought he had me at a disadvantage, and I paused just a moment before I said :

"Well: what you know you know, you know you know. But that does not make me know. Are you absolutely sure that you know what religion is?"

In Scotch fashion he came back at me :

"Sure? Who else would be sure, an' I werena? Sure? Yes, I am. There's two ways to know whether ye know or not. One is the Bible way, and the ither is reason's way, an' I know both. I doot whether ye know either, for ye don't look as if ye had much grip o' things. Ye act as if ye'd been shaken up ower nicht by somethin'."

I made up my mind I had fallen in with an unusual man. He had evidently read my perturbation at a glance. I wondered if he could also read the cause. Wondering just what sort of answer to make, he saved me the trouble by going on :

"Where's your church, anyway?"

I knew he had not changed the subject, by his abrupt question, but was getting ready to renew his discussion with vigor. So I answered promptly :

"It is at Greenton, New York."

"An' where might that be?"

"Well, it might be in the west of the state, and it might be in the south, and it might be in the center, and it might be —"

"Hoot, man," he broke in, "ye're no such a fool as ye look, wi' your might be's an' your might be's. But where is it?"

To have made a point with this queer traveler was

something. I knew I must not lose it, so I answered with care:

"Do you know eastern New York, the part away up the Hudson River, between it and Vermont? Well, there's a lovely little city there in the hills. There's a beautiful winding stream there, whose water is crystal clear and cold. The trout love it and fill it. Sometimes its course is between meadow banks," I proceeded, warming to my subject, "and again at the bottom of great bluffs. It tumbles over rocks; it whirls in eddies; it dashes down in cascades from high terraces. Greenton lies on one of the bends of this stream, which long ago made it prosperous by its water-power."

He broke in eagerly, and his eyes were aglow, "Are there trout there now?"

"Yes, there are trout there; but a man can't go stumbling along the banks discussing with strangers about religion, and carrying a flap-edged Bible in one hand, and a fly rod in the other, and hope for a rise."

"Man," he answered, "ye shouldna speak with disrespect o' the Word o' God, and ye a preacher. It's the cover that's flap-edged; it's na the buik."

I laughed to myself a little over his nice distinction, but I answered:

"All right, I meant no disrespect. There are trout in that river, and my little church stands on the edge of one of the high banks over the river, and the village common lies out before the church. I wish you could see the elm-shaded streets, and the big farm-wagon loads of people coming to church on Sundays, and ——"

"I've heard enough. I'll be changin' my opinion

about ye. What do ye think releegion is, now, anyway?"

"I probably don't know enough about it to answer such a religious man. But I will offer you at random a rather commonplace proposition. Religion is every-day sense for the every-day man about things right and good and true. It is not a fetich nor a scarecrow, and men who carry limp-sided Bibles around openly in public places do not always possess an overplus of it. Religion is a real worth-while affair. I know there are people who do not believe this. There is an old Scotchman ——"

"Hoot, man; I'm Scotch masel'. Ye needna be tellin' me that ony Scotchman doesna believe in releegion. Every last one o' them does. That's why they're Scotch."

I could not help laughing outright. Inclined to resent the laugh, my companion added:

"Ye laugh. Do ye ken what the Scriptures say aboot the cracklin' o' thorns under a pot and the laughter ——?"

"Oh, yes, I know," I burst in. "I ought not to have laughed. But when you called the whole Scotch world religious I felt a laugh inside, and it escaped me. I will not laugh again."

"Oh, but, man, I found nae fault wi' your laughin'. I was juist tellin' ye what the Scriptures say. An' ye dinna believe my countrymen are releegious?"

"Yes, I do," I replied. "I know every Scotchman believes in religion. But were you not just a bit untrue to your countrymen, when you burst in and stopped me from saying what I wanted to when I began 'There's an old Scotchman'? A real Scotchman would have waited to hear."

Whereupon he made another unscotch reply.

"Oh, I'll have to give in to ye. What was ye goin' to say?"

"Well," I resumed, "there's an old Scotchman in Greenton who is the most religious-talking-and-believing man I know. To keep him away from church on Sundays is absolutely impossible. To keep him away from prayer-meeting is just as hard; but to keep him away from Bob's tavern is harder still. And the man who mixes the church and the tavern in that way doesn't seem to me to have that every-day sense in things righteous."

I was not in the least prepared for the reply that came. As skillfully as an angler ever cast a fly he threw out at me a mixture of humor, and Scripture, and that sort of indirect argument the Scotch love so well.

"But, man, how can a Scotchman keep awa' from a tavern? An' doesna the Buik say the good Samaritan went to an inn? What's an inn but a tavern? An' didna he pour in oil and wine? Where did he pour the wine, now? Where could he pour it, except into the man's mouth? Ye see, the Scotchman who goes to a tavern, an' pours in wine, is followin' the example o' the good Samaritan. An' didna the Maister say, 'Go an' do likewise'?"

I rose to the cast. Before I ended my reply, I knew he was chuckling in glee.

"So you think a man is religious, who mixes church and tavern: one day church to six days tavern, or perhaps seven days tavern. Would you like to have your elder and your preacher go to the tavern together, on a Sunday morning before church?"

"An' why not? The elder and preacher who canna

tak' a wee drop thegither before the sairmon, will be at variance wi' each ither." I noticed that as his interest grew, his tongue slipped more and more into the Scotch vernacular. "An' that is contrary to Scripture. Doesna the Psalmist say, 'Behold, how guid and pleasant a thing it is, for brethren to dwell thegither in unity,' an' there canna be ony unity if the elder tak's his drop, an' the preacher willna."

But this time I saw that he believed he had gotten an advantage of me which would enable him to have his little sport, and leave me at the end helplessly outdone in the argument. And I had no purpose to be broken down in any such way. So I returned to my first proposition, that religion is an every-day thing, and for illustration took my old Scotchman again.

"There's Jamie MacNaughton, of whom I wanted to speak. He scouts the idea of every-dayness in religion. He says plainly, 'I got releegion in the auld country when I was a laddie, an' I've had it ever sine, but it is far too fine a thing to be carried around ilka day. Do you suppose I'd wear ma "blacks" ilka day? I want ma releegion to be like them—wi'oot spot, or wrinkle, or ony sic' thing. Sunday's the day for releegion.'"

"I'd like to know that man," said my companion.

I paid no heed, but went right on.

"Let me protest against the whole line of thought represented by the phrase, 'get religion.' A man never gets religion ; religion gets a man : and if once it gets him with a good tight grip, it keeps him out of taverns. I tell you again, religion is every-day sense for the every-day man."

My fellow-traveler was growing impatient. He evidently had his own notions on this subject, and he

I MAKE AN ACQUAINTANCE 31

had asked me the question, expecting me to say I did not know just what religion was, and then he had intended to tell me. But he had given me an opportunity, and I meant he should hear my ideas. So, in spite of his uneasiness, I continued :

“I know men who are religious. Here’s a man who has never made a speech, or a prayer in a prayer-meeting, but the berries he sells are as large at the middle and the bottom of his baskets as at the top, and he is never known to give short weight in grain. He sells milk in Greenton, and no housekeeper ever found a live trout in a milk-pan. People say he is a good moral man, but not religious. I think it is a question of definition. He certainly turns out a very good article of life.”

That gave Henderson his chance. “There : noo I have ye. Ye’re a Unitarian. Ye mix your morals an’ releegion so ye canna tell hither from yon. How can a man be releegious when he’s only moral ? ”

“Who said he was *only* moral ? As for mixing morals and religion, they mix better than religion and whiskey. I said *people* say he is a good moral man, but not religious : and *I* say he is both. Your man who calls himself religious, and who *is* immoral, is the one I am after.”

“Ah, you mean that Scotchman MacNaughton ? ”

“Yes, I mean MacNaughton, and I mean you if you belong in that class. You say you want to know my idea of religion. I’ll give it to you. There is a man in Greenton who will not come to church to hear me preach, but he does love to have me drop into his office, to sit there and talk, over a pan of nuts or apples. No, not cigars,” seeing he was about to interrupt with a question ; “he never smokes. About

the only subject he will talk freely on is religion; sometimes he brings in politics, but I am no politician. I suppose he has quoted to me a hundred times the text, 'pure religion and undefiled before God even the Father, is this: to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.' He will look me squarely in the face and say, 'If that is religion, then I am religious, more religious than your whole church.'

"Hoot, man," broke in the Scotchman, "that's Scripture. That's Bible—an' what's more, it's na quoted richt. Yon's figurative. It's no intended for a standard. Yon's only a definition, an', man, ye canna live a definition."

"Well, I see there's no use in trying to tell you my thought about religion. There's more nonsense going on the subject than you or I can ever upset. There's a deal of religious profession that is sham," I finished warmly. "It talks one way, and acts another."

"Now, there ye show that ye dinna ken what real releegion is, though ye are a preacher. I'm goin' to enlighten your ignorance. Releegion is belief; it isna acts; it's believin' the doctrines. Releegion is believin' what the catechism tells you to believe, *whether ye do or no.*"

Then I broke my promise. I laughed. Laughed without attempt at restraint. He was so earnest, so far away from me in practical thought, and withal so absurd.

Then he spoke. With just the least sign of emotion in his voice, "Man! ye promised ye wouldna be laughin' at God's word."

And taking up his form of expression, I said, "Man! I promised. And I'm not laughing at God's

word. I'm laughing at your words." Then I tried another tack.

"See here, friend; let me tell you what religion does not do, if you will not accept what I say it is. Religion does not steal, nor swear, nor cheat, nor lie, nor defame life, nor debauch virtue, nor set wrong example, nor gamble, nor drink to drunkenness, nor —"

With an imperious wave of his hand he abruptly interrupted:

"There ye go again wi' your things not to do. It makes nae difference whether ye make releegion consist in things done, or in things not done. Didna the Apostle Paul say, 'By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified'? He might with equal sense hae said, 'By the undeeds of the law shall no flesh be justified.' An' how can a man not justified be releegious?"

The train had almost reached Jersey City. The Scotchman had accomplished two things: taken my mind utterly away from my recent experiences, and convinced me as to his own character. After a moment's pause I said:

"My friend, we'll be separating soon, and we shall never meet again. But I'll give you a definition of religion that I hope you'll remember as long as I shall remember the one you have given me: Religion is the soul of man seeking the life of God. I think on that definition, I am more religious than you. For I am seeking that life, while you are probably living any sort of life that happens to please you, and satisfying yourself with yourself by believing every doctrine of the Church."

"Never meet again, is it?" came his reply. "Do I

look like a man that never meets again? I always meet again. An' I'll remember your definition until my deein' day, it's so absurd. But I'm glad ye dropped into this seat, man. I'll be glad to know ye. What would your name be?"

I gave him my name. I thought he started as if surprised; but he only said, "Is that so? That's a —gued name."

"And what is your name?" I asked.

"David Henderson. I live in Duqueboro, Pa. I'm elder in the Kir Jear Presbyterian Church there. I shall be glad to see ye in ma house. But don't forget —I know what releegion is."

He crossed the river by the Cortlandt ferry and I saw him no more, but he left with me the memory of the most unique conversation of my whole life. When he was gone, there came an irresistible desire to see once more that maid of honor. I hoped she would cross the river with me by the Desbrosses street ferry. But she was not to be seen. I looked in vain. Whether her journey had ended at Trenton or Newark, I did not know. But it had ended, and whither she had gone, and where she lived, I did not know.



III

A LETTER FROM NEW ORLEANS

Tim Wendell and I had been walking for nearly two hours on the hills above Green-ton, enjoying a lovely October afternoon. The autumn foliage was superb, and Tim had stopped again and again to look at the near glory and the distant beauty of the forests. At last he said, "Dominie, they say I am an infidel: that I do not believe in God. Look yonder," he pointed to the expanse stretching away westward to the Northumberland hills. "Can any man see such a sight and deny that God is? The Eternal needs no little human voice to prove His being. This outsweep proves Him working, working, ever working. It is your men, who say He stopped His work some seventh day ages ago, that are denying Him."

"Tim," I answered, "I'm glad to hear that speech. It shows your heart right, no matter where your head is."

"Head, Dominie? heart? Is that where you are?" He spoke with great feeling. "I've known you since you were a boy. It is strange you are the only one who comprehends me at all, you and that commercial man, Joe Smith. Now here you go, making division between head and heart. Dominie, look at this." He plucked a beautiful maple leaf, all afire from the autumn conflagration. "Look at it. Can man do that? My head says, 'No, only God can'; and my

heart sings in the night because this is the token of His love for me. Don't ever put my head and heart apart again."

"That's a great confession of faith, Tim. You ought to unite with the church."

"What, Dominie! and be one with your elder Harfis, and your new convert Hobart? A closer, meaner, dirty-dollar lover than Harfis does not live. You know that. And Hobart joined your church because, having become newly rich, he wanted social position which he could get in no other way. Joining the church don't count, Dominie; it don't count."

I saw that line of talk had gone far enough, and I changed the subject abruptly:

"Tim, I want to drop this personal line, and tell you a story."

"All right," he answered. "I'll listen."

Then I told him of my meeting and talking with Henderson on the train. When I had finished, Tim said, "Dominie, that man was playing you. He did not believe a word of what he said. He's uncertain about himself, and he was drawing you out, hoping for something he could use for his own good."

"Oh, that can't be, Tim. He was too dogmatic, too positive for that."

"Don't you know a Scotchman yet? Why, Jimmie MacNaughton will be most positive in mood when he's most negative in mind. If I mistake not, you'll hear from that Scotchman yet. You'll hear him quote your own definition of religion yet, as if it were his. It was fine, Dominie, very fine, but it can't touch mine, you know. Mine is the greatest in the world."

"Yes, Tim, I agree. It is the very greatest in the world." We parted presently at my own home gate.

A LETTER FROM NEW ORLEANS 37

That night I received a letter written from the St. Charles Hotel, New Orleans. It ran:

"MY DEAR PREACHER:

"I met a man last night who is as queer as you are, and who says he knows you. The head-waiter gave him a seat at my table, and before I gave any sign that conversation would be agreeable, he broke out in a loud voice, 'Good evenin'; commercial man, I see.'

"'Who told you so?' I asked. 'Nobody. I guessed. Hit it right, didn't I?' 'No, you didn't,' I said, 'and you're impertinent and a Yankee.' 'No offense, now,' said he, 'no offense. But if I'm a Yankee, you're a wizard. What made you know I was a Yankee?' 'Because you said "guessed,"' I answered. 'No one but a Yankee says "guess" when he jumps at a conclusion. Why did you take me for a commercial traveler?' His answer started a talk that lasted long after we had gone to the veranda with our cigars. It drifted on until it struck on church membership, and the insincerity of Christian people, and all that sort of thing.

"There was a man sitting by who seemed to be listening. He couldn't help hearing, for the Yankee had a voice like a fog-horn. I said, 'See here, man, you're all wrong. Church members are the salt of the earth; the Scripture says so.'

"'Oh, you make me tired,' he said. "I know church members from Casco Bay to the Rio Grande, and if they are the salt of the earth, they've lost their savor. You see I know some Scripture myself.'

"'I am sorry for you. I wouldn't have so poor an opinion of men as they run as you seem to have,' I answered.

"‘Oh, you needn’t waste your sorrow on me. I’ve not a poor opinion of men as they run. It is the men who pose of whom I have a poor opinion. The general run of men don’t profess anything, and they live up to what they don’t profess. The man I’m after is your church member who professes a lot, and does not practice a little. But I do know two religious men.’

“‘Well, what about them?’ I said. The man sitting by was becoming interested. He moved a little nearer. The man went on: ‘One is a preacher, and he goes to church of course. The other belongs to no church, and won’t go to church at all, but he puts up a good square article of life all the time. The church people call him an infidel.’ ‘Where does that preacher live?’ I said. ‘Oh, up in Greenton, New York.’ ‘What’s his name? Is he a Presbyterian?’ ‘Yes, he is a Presbyterian,’ he answered, and then he gave your name. ‘I thought so,’ said I; ‘I know him.’ Then the man sitting by spoke up: ‘Pardon me, gentlemen; I have been overhearing your conversation; probably I should not, but I was interested, and I am rather glad I heard, for the name that has just been given is the name of a man I have met, and I think what you say is true.’ Then the Yankee jumped up, and, standing before the man sitting by, said, ‘True? You bet it’s true. But what a little world this is. You two men both know my preacher. Well: you know a good fellow. He’s just like the sample all the way through.’

“‘Is he a good preacher?’ I said. ‘Well, no, can’t say he is. He’s young, you see. Thinks he knows it all. But he don’t know much about life such as fellows like me lead. But he’s white, and he’s dead

A LETTER FROM NEW ORLEANS 39

earnest about his religion. Whenever I go to Green-ton I go to church; not because of what I expect to hear, but because of what I know of him. I was in college with him Freshman year. Freshmen don't count much, as a rule. But he did. He was the squarest man in the whole college outfit.'

"Is the other man you spoke about all the time talking about pure religion and undefiled, and visiting the fatherless and widows?" said I.

"Yes: how did you know him?"

"I don't know him. But I know the preacher, and he has told me about this "pure religion" man." Then the man sitting by said, "Gentlemen, I think we ought to be acquainted. Would you object to giving me your names? My name is William Wayne Lorraine, and I am from Richmond, Virginia."

"Then I said, "My name is David Henderson, and I am from Duqueboro, Pennsylvania." Then the Yankee said, "I can't match you, gentlemen. Lorraine's French, and Henderson's Scotch; but my name's plain Smith: Joe Smith: and Smith's all creation, and I come from the best town on the map. I'm from Boston."

"We ought to have parted then, but Joe Smith went on talking about church members, and he said finally, "A church member has no business to swear, and drink, and play poker."

"What's the harm with a man doing such things in a moderate, temperate, Christian way?" I said.

"Are you a church member?" he came back at me.

"Yes, and I am an elder, too."

"And do you do such things? If you do, you're another hypocrite, and I'd better stop where I am."

"‘Oh, no,’ I said. ‘Go on. You can’t make it any worse. Go on.’ But as I said that, I heard Mr. Lorraine yawn, and I concluded to stop the talk. So before the Yankee could answer, I said, ‘No, don’t go on. I have an engagement early to-morrow for a client, a young Episcopal clergyman of Paoli, Pa. He loaned some money in Texas on a wildcat land scheme, and I must go to Galveston to look after it. So I’ll have to go to bed.’

“‘Episcopal clergyman? Paoli? Is his name Henry Sinclair?’ said Mr. Lorraine. ‘Yes,’ said I. ‘Do you know him?’ ‘A little,’ he said. ‘He’s my son-in-law. It was at his wedding, about a month ago, I met the Greenton preacher. *He* was Sinclair’s best man. Can’t I have a part in this business affair?’ There was no objection to that, and Lorraine is going with me to Galveston.

“So you see, preacher, I am getting wound up slowly on the same spool with you. What it is all for I do not in the least know. But I am a Presbyterian, and believe the doctrines, and there’s foreordination about it somewhere. I don’t know as I am your friend yet, but perhaps I shall be. I don’t know yet how foreordination will work.

“DAVID HENDERSON.”

At supper that night I told my mother of the letter. How strange it seemed that the chance acquaintance of a railway train had suddenly come into intimate touch with my life. He had met Joe Smith: he knew Mr. Lorraine and Harry. Had he written he knew the maid of honor, I should not have been surprised.

I went over to Tim Wendell’s office after supper, and read the letter to him. It interested him greatly.



A LETTER FROM NEW ORLEANS 41

"I knew you'd hear from him," he said when the reading was done. "I didn't expect to be mixed up in it, though. It begins to look a little as though his life thread, Joe's, yours, and mine might be woven into some pattern in a common fabric."

"That's so, Tim. Do you really think I'll ever see him again, or that you'll ever see him?"

"Sure: he'll drop down here some day."

IV

A HOPELESS CASE

FOR the third time in my two years' pastorate, I had paid Jim Garvey's fine for petty thieving. Jim was a well-known figure in Greenton. For ten years there had been no baseball game played by the Greenton City Stars, in which he had not figured as Aquarius. In my own experience on the diamond, before going to college, and during the vacations of my undergraduate and seminary life, he had given me numberless cups of cold water, but never one in the name of a disciple. An undersized boy of eleven, he had appeared suddenly on the ball-grounds, coming from no one knew where, carrying water for the players, who tossed him pennies.

I was only fifteen myself then, and had gone up to him, boylike, asking :

“What's your name?”

“Jim,” he had answered.

“Jim what?”

“Jim nothin', I guess. What business is it o' your'n?” and the profanity which followed would have done credit to a professional.

Red-haired, bare-footed, he was made grotesque to the extreme by the evidently cast-off garments which he wore,—trousers turned up because too long, a blue swallow-tailed coat with smooth, flat brass buttons, and a straw hat whose top, half severed from the crown, flapped up and down like a loose lid, while

through the rift his shock of red hair stuck out in all directions.

The baseball aggregation was never of high moral order. Some of its men helped on Jim's profanity by their own. By the pennies which they tossed him, they taught him how to spend money freely for tobacco and for beer, and throughout his career tobacco and profanity had been his most striking characteristics.

In one of my college vacations, after I had become quite an important member of the nine, I had undertaken to fathom the character of this bit of human flotsam and jetsam. Whether or not his shambling, unkempt, poiseless figure was the domicile of an immortal soul, was matter for question. Because I believed that there is no form of animated life that will not respond to kindness, I decided to cultivate Jim along the line of kind helpfulness, and as my first move toward his salvation, secured him a place in a shop where drop-forgings were made. Here for a while he worked with alert dexterity. He was then fifteen years old.

"Jim," I asked him one day, "who's your father?"

"Ain't got none."

"Who was your father?"

"Never had none."

"Where did you get your name?"

"Schoolmarm giv' 'er to me."

"How was that?"

"Went to school; 'er asked me my name. Tole 'er Jim. 'Jim what?' sez she. 'Jim nothin',' sez I. Then 'er writ down a name. 'Er turned to the school kids, an' 'er sez, 'Children, this is James Garvey.' 'Ain't nuther,' sez I. 'I'm Jim. That's all I be.' But them kids called me Garvey. I licked one of 'em for it, but

it didn't do no good. Schoolmarm kept callin' me that. I couldn't fight the schoolmarm."

"Why couldn't you, Jim?" I said.

"'Cos ; she's a woman," he answered. "Think I'd fight a woman? I'd 'a' licked any feller tried to fight 'er."

"Jim, you're a kind of gentleman. Do you know it?"

"Shoot 'er, I ain't no swell toggler. I'm Jim."

"What are you going to be when you grow up, Jim?"

"Bum, or cop. Don' know which."

"What would you do if you were a bum?"

"I'd steal, and dodge the cops."

"What would you do if you were a policeman?"

"I'd run the bums and crooks into the cooler."

"Why don't you work; save money; begin to be a man, Jim?"

"Oh," and he poured out an appalling torrent of profanity, "I'd ruther carry water for the 'Stars.'"

It was not long before the factory work palled, through lack of excitement, and Jim fell back into the thieving life that he had begun when, as a little boy, he had stolen fruit from gardens. Now it was old iron which he stole from the shops about the city, and sold to the foundry. When I had finished the seminary, the thieving mania was firmly fixed upon him, and he was as nearly a complete moral degenerate as I have ever known. Three times he had stood before Justice Wendell, and each time Tim had let him off with a fine. True to my rôle of philanthropist, hoping still to save the poor fellow, I had on each occasion paid the fine.

It was on the night of the last of these performances

that Wendell came into my study in a thoroughly disgusted frame of mind.

"Dominie," he said, "I know your game, but you'll lose. If you win, you'll lose. You're playing something against nothing. If you take every trick there'll be no count, for you'll find the cards that blackguard plays are blanks. He's working you. You're smart about everything else. I was over at Bob's to-night. The bums in the bar-room were all laughing at your act this afternoon. I came in to get you to promise to stop."

"Tim," I said, "that boy's got something in him somewhere that's worth getting out. I can't drop him. I'm the only friend he has."

"Well, Dominie, I'll tell you what will happen. You are encouraging him in crime now, and if he becomes a bad criminal you will have part of the blame in this community. And some day he will hit you hard."

That night there was a fire. A tall brick block that stood close to the sidewalk burned. There were stores below, and apartments above. Great efforts were necessary to rescue the roomers. At last, when it was supposed that everyone was safe, there came a fearful cry, and a woman with a baby appeared at a top story front window. The interior of the room was not yet aflame, but the whole rear of the house was blazing, so that escape by the stairs was impossible. There was no ladder long enough to reach the window, and the heat was so intense that no one could stand within fifty feet of the doomed block. Half a block away firemen were trying to lash two ladders together, but, "If they do it," said Tim, "they can't get in there to set it up, and the woman'll burn to death before they can reach her."

The rear wall fell in with a crash ; the flames leaped up behind the wildly shrieking woman.

“ My baby ! oh, my baby ! For God’s love save my baby ! ” Out over the still town rang that heart-rending cry, while she strained the child to her bosom and the flames were breaking into that last room.

Suddenly, a man with a short ladder on his shoulder, and a coil of rope about his neck, was seen going up the telegraph pole before the ruin. He was handicapped by his burden, and the heat was blasting, but he climbed with strength and agility. “ Turn the hose on me, can’t ye ? ” he cried with an oath, “ and wet me rope ! ” It was promptly done. Up he went through the scorching air, oblivious, after the water struck him, to everything but his purpose. At last he reached the top. Once there, it was the work of a moment to lash the ladder to the crosstree of the pole, keeping it all the while raised above him in the air, and to let it down upon the sill of the woman’s window. Over this bridge he went, and, with his rope, let down to safety first the baby, then its mother. Then back across the ladder bridge, and down the pole to solid earth. The flames glared against the dark ; the crowd cheered like a mob of madmen—and no wonder, for the man who had done this marvelous thing was Jim Garvey, my drunken loafer, transformed for the time into a hero.

How that vagabond could conceive such a plan, and carry it out so steadily and so coolly, was to me a wonder. But it confirmed what I had always believed, that there was something worth while about Jim Garvey, if only he could be rescued from present tendencies and given a chance for development.

“ What did I tell you, Tim ? ” I demanded triumphantly of my companion.

"All right, Dominie; but he's a freak. That was a brave and brainy act, but he's a freak. He'll undo that within a week."

"I don't believe it, Wendell," I said. "And I'm going to keep him away from the toughs and not let them get him drunk to-night."

"He's probably drunk now," was the skeptical reply.

I hurried into the crowd to find Garvey. I was just in time to prevent him from going off with a gang to Bob's. I caught hold of his arm.

"Jim," I said, "that was the finest thing I ever saw. How did you happen to do it?"

"Oh, I d'no," he answered. "I never had no chance for nothin' afore. I seen dis one. I took 'er."

My arm had gone through Jim's, and I had begun to walk through the crowd with him, questioning him and talking with him all the while. Jim had no sort of regard for me as a preacher, but unbounded admiration of my ability to play baseball. So he allowed me to lead him along toward my house. When we reached there and I started to take him in, he demurred. "It's late," I urged; "you did a nerve-racking thing, and I'm going to give you some hot coffee and a bite to eat." That made him yield. I put him down into the "Sleepy Hollow" rocker in my study, and went out to do my old college trick of making hot coffee. But when, after perhaps fifteen minutes, I returned with the viands, the study was empty. Jim had gone.

I was greatly chagrined. Jim had quite baffled me. He would surely be drunk before morning. I took the coffee and the bread and butter back to the dining-room, drank Jim's coffee, and went to bed.

Before daybreak there was another fire. It was a barn of my Elder Harfis that burned. Jim Garvey had been seen near the structure just before the fire and running down a back alley just after it burst out. The police had him before morning, and his hearing was at ten o'clock in Squire Wendell's office. The evidence was only circumstantial, but it was very strong. The offense was beyond Tim's power and prerogative, but the evidence was such that he resolved to hold the prisoner for trial at County Sessions, and ordered his commitment to the county jail unless he could furnish bail in the sum of five hundred dollars. Being present at the hearing, I very promptly stepped forward to become his bail. As I signed the bond, the justice forgot his friendship for me, and administered a scathing rebuke for the sentiment I was wasting on this vagabond, and for the premium I was putting on law-breaking. This was in the hearing of the spectators, a gruesome lot, such as throng a police justice's court. He closed his address with a word to Garvey. "You may count yourself lucky," he said, "in having the Dominie for your friend, but I do not think it will take you long to convince him that he is a great fool." Jim shambled out of court without a thank-you to me, and I was almost angry at Tim for the first time in my life.

At dinner my mother said to me, "My son, what have you done with the silver cup?"

"What silver cup, mother?"

"Why, there's only one: the heirloom."

An ominous misgiving went through me as I answered:

"I have done nothing with it. It is on my library table."

"No," she answered. "Mrs. Hobart was in this morning, talking about a thought she had of starting an heirloom to go down in their family from father to oldest son, generation after generation. I told her we had exactly such a thing that your great-grandfather Lord had started. Only he had twelve children, and had given them twelve silver cups, with conditions that the oldest child in each line of descent should have the cup. I went to get ours to show her, and it was not to be found."

So Jim Garvey's vanishing was explained. I went to my study to make pretense of looking for the cup, but I knew it was gone.

I went out and found Jimmie MacNaughton. "Jimmie," I said, "I had a loss last night. It was not discovered until this morning. I had Jim Garvey at my house after that first fire, and I suspect he knows something about that loss. I want you to find him and bring him here. Don't tell him anything of my suspicions or of my loss, but bring him here. Tell him that hot coffee is waiting."

There was no report from Jimmie until evening. Then I heard feet stamping on the porch. MacNaughton was a true Scotchman. What the minister said do, he would do if he could. In he came with Garvey, who was drunk. "Sleepy Hollow" once more received Garvey. Coffee came in presently, and I made both men drink.

After the little luncheon, I said to MacNaughton, "Jimmie, you've done me a good job. Now you need not stay. Garvey wants to talk to me, and he probably doesn't want to have you hear what he's got to say. If I can ever help you, call on me." So Jimmie went out into the night.

I sat down and began to read. I gave no heed to my guest, but kept an unobserved watch on his movements. I saw him look at the place on the table where the cup had been wont to stand, and then glance at me uneasily. I read on. He grew restless; he acted as nearly like a caged animal as he could without rising. At last he slouched up.

"I'm goin', parson," he said.

"Why, no, Jim," I answered. "You haven't told me what you came for. Sit down." I rose and put him back into "Sleepy Hollow."

There was more silence. Finally he blurted out, "Wha' cher want?"

"That's what I would like to know, Jim. What do you want? Why did you come here?"

"Didn't come 'ere. Wha' cher want?"

"Did you like your coffee and grub last night, Jim?" I asked.

"Didn't hev none," he answered.

"What? Didn't you come home from the fire with me to get coffee and bread and butter?"

"Didn't get 'em. Didn't stay," he answered.

"Oh, yes, I remember. When I came back, you were gone. What made you go?"

"Was tired. Wanted to go to bed," was the reply.

"Did you go to bed?" I asked.

"Did—so 'elp me," and he swore until I feared my mother would hear.

When he stopped, I said, "Garvey, do you know why you are not in Salisbury jail to-night?"

"S'pose I do," was his reply.

"What is the reason?"

"'Cos you went me bail," he said.

"What made me do that?"

"Give 'er up. Thet's too hot fer me."

"Who's paid your fines two or three times for little petty thefts, Jim?" I asked.

He made no answer.

"Do you know I've done that, Jim?"

"Yes, I know 'er," he said.

"What do you suppose I did that for, Jim?"

"Give 'er up: can't hold 'er: she's too swift," he answered. Baseball slang stuck to him still.

"See here, Garvey: are you too drunk to understand if I tell you?"

"Who sez I'm drunk? I ain't drunk. I'm just tired. I want to go home."

"You're sober, are you?"

"That's 'er. That's wat I be."

"Well, then, if you're sober, what did you do with my silver cup that you took last night?"

The poor wretch turned pale. He looked at me in a frightened way. I thought he was about to break for the door, to prevent which I rose and turned the key, putting it in my pocket. Then he began to swear.

"So 'elp me I ain't seen 'er; not since she stood right there, I ain't."

"Oh! then you saw the cup standing on the table, Jim?" I said.

"That's 'er, parson, I seen 'er. Eight-sided; marks on the sides," he replied.

"What did you do with the cup, Garvey?"

"Never touched 'er. Ain't never seen 'er," he said.

"Do you know where you are to-night, Garvey?" I asked.

"Yes: I'm 'ere."

"Do you know where you'll be to-morrow night?" I continued.

"Yes, I'll be 'ome in bed—so 'elp me," and he swore once more grotesquely.

"No, Jim. You won't be in Greenton. You'll be in Salisbury jail. I can't prove that you stole the cup, but I'll go to Justice Wendell in the morning and cancel that bail-bond, and he'll send you to Salisbury before night. And this fire means Dannemora or Sing Sing."

"Don' cher do 'er, parson; don' cher do 'er. I'll go to work. I will, so 'elp me. I won't drink no more; I won't, so 'elp me."

"Jim, you go get that cup; you bring it here within an hour. I'll wait right here. If you bring it, all right, I'll let up. If you don't, I'll have every policeman in Greenton after you before midnight."

"I'll do 'er, parson. I'll do 'er. Lemme go git 'er." I took the poor wretch at his word.

When the hour ended, I went out for the chief of police, and started the whole body after Garvey. They searched all night, but did not find him; he had taken French leave. I never saw the cup again.

In the morning, the chief reported to Justice Wendell what had happened. That night he came into my study, very serious.

"Dominie, I'm older than you. I think I can see farther into a white oak plank than you can. I knew where the Garvey philanthropy must end. I'm sorry you've lost that cup. But you've lost more. You'll have to pay that bail-bond. He would have skipped anyway. I don't suppose you can afford that five hundred dollars, but I can't let you off. I'll tell you what I will do: I'll go halves on it with you."

"No, Tim," I said. "You're a mighty good friend, but I'll take my medicine."

"Dominie, you're good stuff," he answered. "But there's one thing more you've lost: you've lost faith in human nature. You have benefited and trusted that vagabond, and twice within forty hours he has deceived and wronged you. Human nature's fairly bad, Dominie, as it goes."

"No, Tim," I answered: "human nature's to be trusted yet. You have shown that in the offer you made just now. And no man can do what Garvey did for that mother and child, unless there's a soul in him with good impulses. I'd like to be the means of finding and setting free the soul that's in Garvey."

"You're a rainbow-chaser, Dominie. You'll never see Jim Garvey again. And you're getting off cheap with a silver cup and five hundred dollars."

"You're wrong, Tim: he'll be back."

"Never, Dominie, never."

About a month later, Tim called me into his office.

"Here, Dominie, here's richness of your own kind. This is the real thing. You'll enjoy it."

He had blue-penciled his Troy morning journal. There was a grim look about his mouth as he handed it to me. Of course the story, highly sensational, was about Garvey. "The Island," in the river between Troy and West Troy, was a malodorous place, and in one of its low dives a quarrel had begun between two men over a game of poker, and had spread to their partisans, until the whole disreputable crowd were pushing and striking and swearing. In the height of the rumpus, one of the principals to the original fight had wrenched a leg from a broken chair and flung it into the midst of his assailants. It had struck a man full in the face, knocked him to the floor senseless, with a great gash on his cheek, and one eye

forever gone. Just at that point the police had burst in and seized the malefactor, who was eagerly pointed out by the cowards who wished to save themselves.

Garvey's offense was aggravated assault and battery. He had spent the night in the police station, and had been arraigned next morning. The hearing had been brief. Our wonderful law had permitted him to drink in a licensed saloon. Then it lodged him in the city prison for the consequences of its own permission. The case was clear, and Sing Sing was the sure outcome for Garvey. When I had ended the gruesome tale, Tim said with apparent satisfaction :

"Dominie, it's a pity you were not down at that hearing. You could have put up more bail-money for your protégé."

"Tim," I said, "shut up." And I walked out of his office.

V

TIM GIVES ME AN OUTING

THE only coach on the Adirondack Railway from Saratoga to North Creek was as primitive and uninviting as the roughest backwoodsman could desire. There were forty passengers, and some few had the equipment of sportsmen: rods, creels, and guns. There was a sleeping car from New York on the rear of the train, but it was inaccessible. After Lucerne was passed, and the great gorge of the Sacandaga River crossed, the ride was full of delight. Nearer and nearer the whirring train brought the bare granite mountains. Shallower and narrower grew the Hudson. Now one could wade across without the water coming to the knees; then there were deep eddies that lay at the bottom of long ripples, at the lower edges of which fishermen were casting. Pebbles and stones of every shape filled the river-bed, and here and there boulders so large that the stone in them would have built a house. I called the attention of a man who sat in the seat before me to some of them. He wore a soft hat with a wide brim, and snells and flies hooked to the hat-band. I said, "What tremendous boulders those are!"

"What! them stuns?" he answered.

"Yes," said I. "How did they get here, alone, away from the great rocks?"

"Oh," he answered, and I could not tell whether his words were irreverent, or whether he only felt

contempt for my evident greenness. "Oh, yes ! them stuns. I'll tell ye how them got here. Them's some of the seed the Old Man dropped when he was plantin' them big mountings." Then he looked at Wendell and laughed, and I subsided. Tim had evidently seen him before. As it transpired, this very man was to be the driver of our rig that afternoon. He was John Pike, one of the old drivers, full of quaint humor.

At North Creek there was a scramble for places on top of the big stage-coach. Not relishing a long ride inside, I was starting to run with the rest, when Tim called out, "Hold on, Dominie, we'll do better." So the big stage drove off without us. Wendell gathered our effects out of the baggage car: two big packing baskets, two rubber blankets, two rubber overcoats, and the various equipment of a fisherman's outfit.

"Dominie, watch these," he said ; "I'll go hunt up a buckboard and driver." Very soon he was back with old Scarritt, the stage-starter.

"Yes," said this official, "it is just lucky for you. There's a party of four to go into Indian Lake to-night, bound for Lake Pleasant. You're going to Hosy's, I suppose. The rig'll take you all easy. I'll send Pike to drive. That be all right ?"

"Yes, that will suit us well. Send up your buckboard."

Off he hustled and presently from among the dozen or more waiting vehicles the Indian Lake party was driven to where we stood on the platform. My heart stopped still. There was a man, a woman evidently his wife, and a young man whom I at once recognized as Bruce Fraser. The fourth member of the group was a young woman, and as the buckboard stopped, and she saw me, her face turned as white as a living

face can. I was face to face with the maid of honor. Hurriedly I drew Tim away.

"See here, old man," I said, "that rig can never carry us with all our luggage in addition to that party. Let's get another."

"Oh, hush," he answered. "There are three seats. What's three on one seat for men? I've gone in from here four on a seat. What's the matter with you? You look as if a hurricane had blown your wits away."

I pulled myself together, and, by helping John Pike put our luggage aboard, kept behind the wagon. The maid of honor and her companion had the back seat, so I did not have to face the girl until everything was ready for the start. Then I stepped to the side of the two ladies and doffed my hat.

The maid of honor greeted me by name, adding, "I thought I knew you when we drove to the platform, but you rushed off too quickly for me to assure myself by speaking."

"But I knew who he was at first sight," said Fraser. "How are you, Dominie? Got over St. David's yet? Who's your friend?"

Bruce's remark opened the way for a general introduction, by which I found that the girl's other companions were her brother and his wife. I made Tim take the middle seat beside the two men, while I sat in front with John Pike. The afternoon might have been awkward but for Wendell. He snuffed the air of the forest, his spirits rose, and his tongue was loosed. "It's strange how small the world is, and how people who meet once are sure to meet again," he said.

"Yes, and sometimes I wish the world wasn't so

small," added Fraser. That he intended a declaration of war was plain enough, and I accepted it in silence.

But Tim answered, "I wish that too, when I want to get into the woods in comfort, and there's only one vacant seat, and another fellow beats me in the scramble. But it's all right to-day," and then he chuckled.

I never had heard Tim go on as upon that drive and I was wondering if he might have been drinking, when John Pike suddenly said, "Stranger, thar's sumthin' beats them river stuns holler."

"Where? What?" I asked.

"Why, them trees thar by the pond," he answered, as he pointed to a small pond in a hollow between two hills a little off the road. "See that pond? See that furder hill? That's B'ar Hill. No b'ars now. Fifty year ago, 'fore thar wuz much travel, B'ar Hill was full of 'em."

"Well," said I, "what had the bears to do with the trees?"

"That's the queer thing," said he. "Wa'n't no other b'ars like them b'ars in these woods. Them b'ars eat the tops off them trees and lef' 'em stan'in' like telegraph poles."

"But that wasn't possible," I said.

"Fact," said he; "fact, jes' as true to-day as it ever was, too."

"But they couldn't," I remonstrated.

"But they did," he answered. "Them b'ars was built so't they could climb up on the tiptop of any tree an' hold theirselves like flyin' squirrels, and then they eatened their way right down, leavin' nothin' but them stumps you see thar. State of New York gin a bounty to kill them b'ars, fear they'd eat up the hull forest. I killed two hundred of 'em myself. Got ten

dollars apiece. G'lang, y' lazy critters," he cried, and cracked his whip. The team plunged, the buckboard lurched ; I heard Pike say, "Them was awful b'ars," and then a roar of laughter went up from the two back seats, while the maid of honor made to me the first remark she had volunteered since the drive began :

" You are to be envied your place on that front seat. You have a most entertaining companion."

" Right, ma'am," John Pike answered, " I be ; and I ain't no liar nuther."

Whereupon there was another laugh, and Wendell said, " No, John, you're no liar. Alvah Dunning is the only liar in the woods."

John turned to the company behind, the most serious face a mortal ever wore. " That's so, Squire," he said. " It's scandalous what an awful liar Alvy is. Nobody don't believe nothin' he don't say."

An ominous cloud hung over the mountain as we came out into the open beyond the long hill leading up from the North River Inn. There were lightning and thunder, and the rain came on with incredible speed. There was no shelter possible, and the ladies were in a panic. But Wendell was an old woodsman. He made John stop ; took out the rubber blankets, asked the ladies to stand ; wrapped a blanket about the skirts of each ; had them put their hats in their laps under the blankets ; put a rubber coat on each one, and a rubber tarpaulin on each head.

" Ladies," he said finally, " you will go absolutely dry. Let the rain soak, it will not touch you. We four men will have to take it. I'm sorry for you, gentlemen," speaking to his seat companions, " but it can't be helped. The Dominie and I are equipped for just this thing. The storm will not last very long,

and the day is not cold. We'll be all right." And then the tempest broke. The maid of honor had on my coat and hat, though she did not know it. The rain swept down in sheets. John Pike kept the horses moving as rapidly as he was able. Once only he spoke:

"This 'ere rain's wetter on the under side than 'tis on top. Alvy sez it goes up agin, dry side up. Sez he's seen it goin' up. Sez the sun draws it. Do you b'leeve that, Squire? Do you b'leeve rain goes up agin?"

"Well, yes, John; I guess that's so."

"Wal, if you sez so, I'll take 'er down, Squire. But if the side of that 'ere rain that goes up is dry, I wish the Old Man up there would send her down bottom side up. I do, Squire. It's bad for hosses wet side down."

I never had seen such a sight as greeted our eyes when the clouds were driven eastward by the wind. Twenty miles beyond, high up against the infinite azure rose the masses of the Adirondacks. For forty miles from north to south they swept, blue, rugged, irregular and fascinating in outline. From the moment that storm-cloud passed until we turned into the Indian Lake road, great Blue Mountain and picturesque West Mountain were not once out of range. The guides call Blue Mountain "The Elephant." That is the figure the outline makes against the sky, looking from the east.

John Pike spoke, after the two ladies had lavished fine phrases on the wonderful scene. Said he, "Squire, the Elephant hain't got no furder south than when you was in last. He seems to hev got stuck. Probably's waitin' for Alvy to help him. But Alvy's too busy lyin'."

"You don't seem to have a high opinion of your 'Alvy,' Pike," I said. "Don't the guides like him?"

"Oh, yes, Alvy's popular," he answered; "all liars is. You talk to ary guide in the woods, an' he'll tell you in the eye-dentikle languidge I'm usin', ary one of 'em will, 'every guide in the woods likes Alvy, but me.'"

"By 'me' meaning you, John," said I.

"Not by a long shot," was the answer; "meanin' hisself."

There was a great laugh, and the maid of honor said, "Mr. Pike!"

"Ma'am to you," said he.

"Where is the Elephant?"

"Right forinst ye," said he. "The Squire calls him 'Blue Mounting.' But I don't see no sense in it. The hull gallery's blue. Don't you know what the Big Book sez, 'It's distance sends enchantics into view, an' makes the mountings look forever blue.' Parson Kempshire from New Jersey larned me that. Ma'am, the hull bunch is blue, but there's only one Elephant."

"But, Mr. Pike," said the elder woman, "if the Elephant is that mountain, what do you mean by his not moving?"

"Mean, ma'am? Just what I said, ma'am. He hain't moved a foot since the Squire was in las' year."

"Why, of course," the lady replied. "Mountains can't move."

"The Elephant can, ma'am," he answered. "Forty year ago, when I fust come in here, he was twenty full mile furder north. He come down a mile a year sometimes; half a mile sometimes. But he hain't moved for a year. An' I ain't lyin' nuther. I never lie when I can think of a truth that will suit me better. We

leave that to Alvy. He'd tell ye the Elephant tuis somersaults. But he don't. 'Pon my word, don't."

John was right. There is only one Elephant, there's only one West Mountain. Wendell calle "Old Snowy," and John called it "French Cap," for the peculiar shape of the top. It lay south and to left of our road, and Wendell told the ladies "The Castle of Indolence," where they would sit that night, was at its base.

"What is the Castle of Indolence?" asked the maid of honor.

"David Thornton's camp," answered Tim. "They call my name for it. It's a place where there is nothing to do, and nothing to do it with, and nothing to show it after you get it done. It is the lazy corner of the world. The only one who works is Mrs. Thornton. She is a famous cook. The mountain air is a tonic. 'Old Snowy' is behind you, forever on guard. Sometimes a bear comes into the berry patch behind the castle to save David the trouble of picking the berries. A hermit thrush will sing in a tall hemlock there at eight o'clock to-night. A bald-headed eagle will sit on the high top of a dead fir across the lake all day to-morrow, watching for fish. Duty is never thought of up there, and conscience never troubles any one. There are three cabins; one is dormitory and parlor, one is dining-room; one is David's own home. They all look as if they had been drawn each out of the other, one next it, like a three-barreled telescope. The spaces between the houses are covered porches, and the porches run all along the fronts too. Greatest party in the world for an idler. I wish your party would stay there a week. I'd take you to the top

Snowy, and show you such a panorama as you never saw."

Then the voice of the girl, whose eye could flash like cold steel, spoke: "Thank you, Mr. Wendell; I think one night in such a place would exhaust even our capacity for indolence, and you gentlemen might find us more troublesome than we have been on this drive."

And I understood what she meant, though Tim did not.

When the storm had spent itself, we four men were soaked. Wendell and I were in old clothes, prepared for such Mayday mishaps, but the other men had fared ill. Their new spring suits were ruined. Tim took our rubber coats from the ladies and put them upon the men; wrapped them tightly about them, and the rubber blanket about their legs.

"You'll steam yourselves dry before we reach Locke's," Tim said, "and you won't take cold; but I'll not vouch for what may happen if you don't keep wrapped."

The two men must have been uncomfortable, but there was no other way, and I was glad to get Bruce Fraser into as uncomfortable a state as I could.

When we reached Indian River Tavern, there was a stop for fifteen minutes for rest. All alighted and entered the snug little wayside hotel. We men went to the office, which served also as bar-room, and there wrung a little of the water from our dripping coats. Fraser drank whiskey heavily during our brief stay, though Wendell and the older man took only enough to prevent cold. Our companions informed us that they were going directly on, without stopping for supper at Locke's. I proposed to Tim that we keep them company, but he would go no further.

As a result of his three glasses of whiskey at the tavern, Fraser, during the rest of the ride, was drunk—not hopelessly or stupidly so, but so unsteady that I saw it would not be safe to trust him in a canoe with another person. Three guides, with their boats, were to meet the party at Locke's, and I told John Pike to see that they loaded the two women in one boat, and one man and a part of the luggage in each of the other boats. I did not mean to have the maid of honor put in peril of her life.

Our companions went directly from the buckboard to the boats, where my prearrangement was carried out, the guides flatly refusing to go in any other way, in spite of Bruce's wrath.

Tim made the men wear our rubber coats and blankets still, and we gave the ladies our heavy camp blanket, with request that all be left at Thornton's Castle, whither we would follow in the morning. The ladies were profuse in their expressions of gratitude to Wendell, and with real regret we saw them row away up the lake. I had been hoping all the afternoon that something would keep them at Locke's over night, and that I then might get the sort of opportunity with the maid of honor for which the afternoon had prepared. But they were gone; and when I thought the whole episode over, I remembered that in spite of all her courteous manner she had addressed but one sentence to me, beyond those made necessary by social conventionality.

At supper Tim said, "Who was that girl, Dominie?"

"You know all I do, Tim: her name and the fact that she was at Harry Sinclair's wedding, as I was."

"Is that all you know?"

"Every bit."

"Where does she live?"

"I don't know."

"Well, Dominie, she's the most beautiful girl I ever saw; and if I were in your place——"

"Oh, hush, Tim; you're not in my place. She's gone. Let her be gone."

Tim looked at me with a queer look, whistled, and said, "I'll go down and look the boat over."

It was nearly dark when Tim came back, reporting everything in order and ready for a start. Sitting on the floor of the porch, with feet on the steps, elbows on knees, and his face in his hands, gazing out over the lake, he said presently:

"You bluffed me about the girl. I'll try another tack. Who's the man?"

"Stupid," I replied, "didn't you hear her say he was her brother?"

"Oh, bother the brother. Be square. Who was the young sprig that you don't like, and who doesn't like you?"

"Why, I introduced him to you. If you've forgotten his name, it's Bruce Fraser."

"Well, why don't you like him? I know why I don't—he's too fond of his gin. I don't care for that sort. He's engaged to the girl, I take it, and I'm sorry for her."

"If he is, it's none of your business, nor mine. She'll find out her mistake some day."

"See here, Dominie, I never saw you so cranky before. Are you——? By Jove! I believe you're in love with her yourself!"

"Shut up, Tim. I hate Fraser—he's a drunken fool—and I never expect to see her again."

When we reached "The Castle of Indolence," to-

ward noon next day, the party had gone on to Lewey Lake. But in David Thornton's guest-book the older man had written his own name, and following that were the words, "wife and sister, Newark, N. J." Then came Fraser's name, also of Newark. I smiled and thought, "Well, my lady, I have at least learned where you live." Tim had gone out into the woods with his gun. I lay in a hammock on the porch between two of the three log houses which make the "Castle of Indolence," with a smudge-pan sending up resinous smoke to drive off blackflies. I was reading Carlyle's "Diamond Necklace."

Tim came back, looked over my book, and said, "That necklace vanished through the Horn Gate of Dreams, I believe."

I answered with a laugh, "Yes, that's what it did."

"But the girl!" said Tim. "It's Newark, isn't it, Dominie? No Horn Gate about that."

"Yes, Newark," I said.

"Well, as I was saying," he went on, "if I were in your place — "

"Dinner, Squire. Dinner, Mr. Dominie," sounded a child's voice. And we went to dinner, and there were bear steak and five kinds of pie.

VI

AN UNEXPECTED GUEST

MID-AFTERNOON Friday had come. My sermons were not ready; for the morning, though spent in study, had been fruitless. The calls which had been planned for that day had been made. The westerly-facing porch of my home was a charming place in the summer afternoon, and I was enjoying its comfort, tilted back in a great arm-chair. There was a book in my hand, but my reading wits were wool-gathering. Each time my fingers turned a leaf, the face of a girl would look out at me,—a girl wearing a yellow oilskin hat and coat, wrapped in a rubber blanket. She was in a buckboard on the Blue Mountain road, and the drenching rain poured down relentlessly; yet she was laughing in girlish glee as she saw her brother and Wendell and me walking up the road, soaking and dripping with the rain. Repeatedly I shook off the hallucination, and with determination began to read. Repeatedly also the lines of the book ran together, my eyelids closed, and my head dropped forward; then down the chair went with a thump to the floor, waking me with a start. The influence of "The Castle of Indolence" was not yet out of my brain. Out of one of the most satisfying of those little interludes between girl and book, I was waked by the rumble of the Concord coach that brought passengers from Camblet, on the railroad, eight miles away.



I sleepily watched the coach driving away from my house, and at the same moment noticed a big man standing on the porch near me, laughing heartily. I heard him say, "Juist like all the preachers; workin' hard ere the day wanes."

It was David Henderson. Too much surprised to realize anything but his presence, not awake enough to know exactly where I was, I imagined that Henderson and I were together in the Jersey City station, and my first words were, "Yes, there are trout there, big ones."

Then he roared again, and when his laughter had subsided, cried, "Wake up, man! Throw down the buik. Gie me your han'. Gie me a welcome."

Fairly aroused by that, I grasped his hand, saying, "Mr. Henderson, I'm glad to see you here. Give you a welcome? Well, I should say. You caught me; indeed you caught me. Can you take a trout as unawares as you took me?"

"That I can, an ye gie me the chance," he replied.

"I wish I could give you the chance," I answered. "But you are too late, Mr. Henderson. It's late June. The trout have gone to deep water. Did you come fishing?"

"What else would I come for?" he asked. "I crossed your river in yon stage. It's a gey-lookin' river."

"Yes, that's unexcelled, that river," said I. "But you're too late."

"Losh, man, ye dinna ken me. Do I luik like a man that is ever too late for anything he wants?"

"All right, you shall make your trial," I said. "But come in now, let me show you to your room," and I started for the door.

"No," he spoke very quickly, almost impatiently, "I'll no go in. I'll be after castin' a fly."

"But you're too late in the day," I said. "To-morrow I'll see you have good sport at some spring-holes, if I can find a guide for you."

"I'm no too late in the day," he insisted. "Your trout are no differ frae ony ither trout, an' they all know when Davie Henderson casts his fly."

"Well, wait until to-morrow," I said once more.

"Man, you a preacher, and talkin' to an elder aboot to-morrow? Dinna ye ken there's no to-morrow? To-day was to-morrow yesterday, an' to-morrow'll be to-day to-morrow."

"Well," I said, "there's no time to go to the spring-holes in the to-morrow that to-day was yesterday, anyway."

"Time? Spring-holes?" he retorted. "What do I care for time or spring-holes? Isna the river juist beyond? What's to hinder castin' a fly noo, richt noo, juist doon that bank yonder?"

"There's nothing to hinder," I said, "except that I know Greenton River trout better than you do, and the shadows are deep under the banks at this time of day, and there's no deep water there."

"Nonsense; trout will rise to my fly at midnight if I say so. I tell ye I've got to go doon and speak a word wi' those trouties to-day."

"All right: we'll go down, but it is a fool's errand," and straightway we bore his luggage into the hall. There he opened up his fishing-case and produced a fly-rod, one of the lightest I had ever seen, his book of flies, and a bottle of whiskey. I said:

"See here, Mr. Henderson, our trout do not drink whiskey. I'll go show you the best accessible place

to cast a fly, but I'm the preacher for that church there, and I will not be seen in company with any such helps to angling as you have in that bottle. You'll have to excuse me."

"Fash! dinna be uneasy: it's only for a libation to the gods. Come along noo."

The Presbyterian church in Greenton stands upon a bluff, one hundred and fifty feet above the river. Perfectly familiar with it from boyhood, I went down the zigzag path on the run, but Henderson was stout and clumsy. He was puffing and blowing like a porpoise before he had gone forty feet, and calling out:

"Man, do ye think I want to dee before I get a chance to mak' a cast? I'm too much o' a man to dee in a wee feckless toon like this. Wait till I get ma breath."

"I'll wait when I get to the bottom," I called back. "I thought you were a fisherman."

"I am a fisherman: the best i' this toon the day; but I'm no wild animal to go racin' doon precipices. Wait, I tell ye."

But my laugh as I got to the bottom was my only answer. When he finally came up with me his face was as red as a boiled lobster.

Oh, that Greenton River! How fresh, how clear, how cool its waters come from the distant hills to lave the feet of the gravel banks made by the glaciers thousands of years ago. Out of the sides of those bluffs come sparkling streams of ice-cold water. Where they flow into the river, the trout lie at the bottom of the reefs or at the lower edges of the pools. Near one of these rivulets, Henderson reached the edge of the river, and in an instant he was trans-

formed. Kneeling by the ice-cold rill, he dipped his palm full of the water. Then lapping and tasting, and lapping again, he said, "Aye, there'll be trout there." Next, having adjusted his fishing-rod and chosen his flies, he produced his flask. He stood for a moment like one lost in thought: then, lifting high the flask, he poured out upon the air enough for a man to drink, and said as if he were a priest at a shrine, "Here's to ye, Izaak! Ye hae drunk my draught full many's the time. Likewise ye hae brought the cast and the rise o' the trout thegither. Noo bless the cast and the rise, as ye hae dune for me full many's the time."

That was the strangest act I ever saw performed by a Presbyterian elder.

The timber growth was heavy on the bank where we had descended, and I had no thought of stopping. To cast a fly without hopelessly tangling the line in the low-growing branches was next to impossible. But when I started up the stream, Henderson would not move.

"Here's the place to cast," he said doggedly.

"But you can't do it here," I answered.

"Who telt ye I couldna?"

"Well, nobody ever does."

"An' dinna ye suppose I would be knowin' that? That's juist the reason I'm stoppin' here."

I couldn't budge him. It was cast there or nowhere. As he began casting, I watched him with mute admiration at his skill. With a side swing he whipped his line this way and that, letting out a little more with each return until he dropped his fly just at the edge of a long pool. There was a break as a large trout rose, and at the instant Henderson struck. It was a

full half hour before he landed that fish. He was sport incarnate. He knew how. So did the fish. Neither left a trick untried. But the man won, of course. What can a fish do against a man? I sat on a rock and watched. Though I had lived on that stream for years, I had never caught such a fish. The common belief was that no trout would rise to a fly anywhere in the course of the stream through the town. The boys could once in a while snare one with a slip-noose made of braided horsehair. But here had come a stranger who, at his first attempt, destroyed all tradition. And with an air of triumph he turned to me.

"Man, didn't I tell ye?" he said.

He kept at the sport only a little longer, but when we returned to the parsonage he carried three fish, of which the largest weighed five pounds, and the smallest a trifle over two pounds. Henderson was in high glee.

"Ye see, it was the libation to old Izaak," he chuckled.

It was dark when we came up from the river, and I knew the tea-table had been waiting long. I hurried my guest to his room to prepare for tea. That gave me time to recall to my mother my first meeting with him and to tell her how utterly unexpected was this visit. I was not quite sure how she would like him. Very strong in her likes and dislikes was my mother. She was sixty-five years old, religious by nature and circumspect by training. She had seen husband and four children embark on the strange voyage over unseen seas into unknown lands. I was her youngest and only remaining son. She had given me the best education her means would afford, and had been filled

with unutterable joy when I was called to the Presbyterian church in Greenton. A native of that village, she had seen it grow from a hamlet to a prosperous country town; and as the wife of one of its foremost citizens, she had been active in every good work. But she was an old lady now. Her hair was white, and very beautiful. She parted it in the middle, brushing it smoothly down and catching the white curls on each side by a short tortoise-shell comb. A little cap with a lavender ribbon was her head-dress. She was an old-fashioned lady, who belonged to another age, but who had brought its grace and loveliness down into the present. She had been able, in spite of sorrow, to keep her heart fresh, her mind clear, and her thought vigorous about all the things that transpired from day to day. The New York *Tribune* she read each week. For every happening of that time she had her own interpretation, and to convince her that she was beaten in an argument was difficult.

Not until Henderson came down to supper did I have opportunity to present him to my mother. As I heard his foot on the stairs, we hastened to meet him. I thought my mother very beautiful, and was pleased when with a courtier-like bow, he greeted her saying, "It is a delight to be in so pleasant a home, madam, and I see why I have become so interested in your son."

"I am delighted to hear that," she made answer. "I am interested in him myself; he is my only one now—that is, my only one here. We are glad to make you welcome to our Greenton home."

I saw that his old-time courtliness had won her. Turning to me, Henderson said like a flash, "An' is

this all the women ye've got; juist a mither? Is there never a wife's mither around?"

"No," I replied, laughing, "there's no wife's mother."

"Well, that would be all right. Wife's miters are no the things for poor preachers—an' ye ken the New Orleans man told me ye were a poor preacher."

The insinuation disturbed my mother.

"Mr. Henderson, he is not a poor preacher. He is a good preacher, a very good preacher," and the dear lady bridled back as only old ladies of a past generation can. Henderson was equal to the occasion.

"That does great credit to your heart, madam. An' he's a better preacher, I doot, a far better preacher than he would be, were ye no his mither."

My mother liked a compliment. Smiling, she said, "I think tea is ready."

When we were in our places, I asked my guest to say grace. As he responded, there came into his speech the flavor of that talk in the train.

"Oh, Lord, mak' us thankfu' for what we hae, and for what we hae na: for ane's juist as good as the ither, since it's Thy work anyway. Amen."

I dared not look at my mother, but I thought I felt a little shake of the table from her side. Henderson was surely queer when he entered the realm of religion.

"D' ye believe in profession of releegion, madam?" Henderson said this to my mother almost in the same breath with his "Amen." He was beginning with her as he had with me.

But she turned him from the discussion for which he was evidently longing, by saying: "I certainly do. But, Mr. Henderson, I have not thanked you yet for the honor you have done us in accepting my son's invitation to be our guest."

"Invitation? I never had any invitation. I juist came. I wanted to see if the youngster was leein' aboot thae trout."

"Well then, let me thank you for feeling sure we would be hospitable, and that you would find open doors, even if not invited."

"But I didna feel so. I didna ken whether that youngster and his wife would make me welcome or no. But, speakin' o' the wife," with a sudden change of tack, "I beg your pardon for not askin' for her before. Why dinna ye bring her in? We're havin' the tea withoot her. Is she sick or awa', or are ye ashamed o' her? Ye telt me there wasna any wife's mither, but there's a wife somewhere, of coorse, ye bein' a bishop."

"No," I broke in, "there isn't any wife. I wish there were, but there isn't."

"Oh, I beg pardon. She's deed, then? Ye're a widower? How lang since she's deed, man? Why don't ye wear a weed, an' where's the baby?"

I answered, "Mr. Henderson, you're all wrong. There never was any wife, so she is not dead; and I'm not a widower, and there is no baby."

"Do ye sit there and tell me that? You a preacher, an' no wife? Dinna ye ken the Scripture? A bishop must be the husband of one wife? Or perhaps it's engaged ye are, an' the happy time is comin'?"

"No, it is not engaged I am, though I would like to be. The truth is, I never saw but one girl I had the least desire to win for my wife, and I might just as well try to win the love of the original statue of the Venus de Milo."

"Is that so, dear boy?" my mother exclaimed. "Is there a girl somewhere by whom you've been enslaved?"

I had never told my mother about the maid of honor. I could not. All that experience around old Paoli had sunk too deep.

But ere I could make reply to my mother, Henderson said, "Not another lassie i' the world for ye, eh?"

"No, Mr. Henderson, not another one."

"No more trout i' that river than those I caught?"

"I don't know," I answered. "Not many more like the big one, anyway." I had caught the drift of his remarks.

"Oh, yes, there are, man; any quantity of 'em for him who kens how to catch 'em. No more girls i' the world, that ye'd have? What do ye, up here in the country, know aboot girls? There's lots o' girls. The right fly an' the right cast will get the trout."

"Well, let them have them, that can get them," I returned a little wearily. "I shall never strive to find the place where they are, nor to choose the right fly, nor make the right cast." And as I spoke, the scenes at old St. David's and our meeting after in the mountains, and her beauty, and her power to hold me fascinated, came over me, and I longed for her as I never had before.

"Oh, losh, man, ye will. I know a girl,—my! but I know a girl. If ever ye see her ye'll have your rod an' line out in a minute. Ye'll say ye never saw so beautiful a woman before in all your life, an' ye'll tell truth, too."

"Who is she?"

"Hear him! 'Never saw but one girl. Never shall see another.' An' I say, 'I know a girl,' an' he jumps like a trout wi' his 'Who is she?' Oh, ye rise easy."

"Well, but who is she?"

"I willna tell ye. That would spoil a' the fun I'm goin' to have wi' ye. Would you, madam?"

"No, I do not think I would," answered my mother. "He might go to find her, and then I should lose my boy."

"Don't fear," I answered, as we rose from the table. "I shall not go seeking this girl, nor any other, while you live, mother."

It was Friday night. I supposed Henderson would be off in the morning, having tried the fish to his satisfaction. I realized that if he should remain, I would not in the least know what to do with him.

There was no possible question as to how my day must be spent. There would be hard study all day. When we reached our little library my mother and he returned to the old subject which seemed to be always on his mind. What they were saying did not particularly interest me, but all at once Henderson turned to me:

"Say, parson, are there any guid spots i' the river where we can go to-morrow?"

I could only answer, "I hope you will not consider me inhospitable, but we can't find any spots, good or bad, to-morrow. I'm out of it. I can't give you and your trout one moment."

"Ye won't go fishin'?" he asked in undisguised amazement.

"No. I'm sorry, but no's the word. I have two sermons to make to-morrow."

"What! not go fishin' wi' me? Ye'll no get anither such a chance in a hurry. Why, man, I'm the best fisherman in the two states of New York and Pennsylvania."

"That's probably so. You showed yourself an artist this afternoon. But I can't go. I've got to preach Sunday."

"Then there's some friend o' yours, like enough? Some man or boy who can appreciate his privileeges?"

Then I thought of Tim Wendell, and said, "Perhaps I can find a man. I'll go out and see." If I could get these two men together I would do both of them a good service. I started for the door.

"Are ye afraid to have me go too? Would I scare the man?" said he.

"Scare him?" said I. "No, he don't scare. Come on."

Tim Wendell was not only the most intellectual man in Greenton, but also the best rifle-shot in our whole section, and I had seen him, when deep trolling in Raquette Lake, land a trout in a way that would beat the ordinary guide. Yet he could not take a fish with the fly in the Greenton River. He went always to the little tributaries. I took Henderson's three trout along to show to Tim. They had been dressed and were very handsome. Amazed at the three fish, Wendell eagerly caught at the chance to have a whole day with a real fisherman. He promised to call for my guest at eight o'clock next morning, and we said good-night.

After sitting at home for a little, Henderson said:

"Ye'll no be able to make thae sermons wi' me off after trout, I doot."

I answered, "Well, I'll try, anyway."

Very soon my guest said good-night to my mother in his courtliest manner, and left us alone.

I knew I was in for it. I knew that remark at the tea-table, about the only girl, would have to be ex-

plained. I knew my heart-story must be told before we slept. She sat down on the sofa and pulled me down beside her.

"Now, boy," she said, gently, "what is it? How was it?"

My heart talked then, though my lips spoke.

"Mother, she was Phyllis Lorraine's maid of honor. I have seen her on two occasions only. One was at St. David's, and the other was on the trip with Mr. Wendell up to Indian Lake last month." Then I told her the story of the drive. "I learned where she resides only by seeing the entry on the cabin register at Thornton's. She cares not an atom for me. I was courteous to her. But whenever I made attempts to show a real human interest in her and to arouse an equal one in her toward me, she put me off coldly. She is the most beautiful woman I ever saw—young woman, I mean. You, blessed mother, you are not in this comparison. I have not moped, have I? I have been no heartsick lover. Long after St. David's I thought the heyday about marriage had burned out of my blood, but the Indian Lake drive convinced me to the contrary. That night at Locke's was the night of the restless lover. But the ten days at 'The Castle' settled it all. I am through. A happy, love-made marriage I shall never know. A sense of duty to my people may induce me to marry, but never, while you live, mother." And I never did.

She kissed me tenderly. "You are like your father, my boy. He was a brave man: not for fighting, but for bearing. But you are young, dear, and the girl waits for you somewhere who will be your wife." And that was true also.

VII

WENDELL'S QUEER DAY

WENDELL and Henderson made an early start. With misgivings I saw them go, for Wendell's canoe was one of those cranky Adirondack boats, and Henderson was weighty. A move too swiftly made in playing a trout might easily overturn the frail craft. A dam below Wendell's boat-house sets back the water for about two miles, before it is met by a fall so high as to stop all rowing. Wendell and Henderson paddled easily to the "carry," and passed around with little delay.

On the walk up to the boat-house and for the first two miles of rowing Henderson was unusually quiet. He was watching Wendell and studying him. But he began to talk almost as soon as they were started in the boat beyond the "carry."

"Lived here some time, I doot," was his first remark.

"Yes," was the answer, "some time."

"Two years, four years, six years?"

"Yes, twenty-six years."

"Ye ken the preacher lang syne, then. D' ye ken any guid o' him?"

"I've known him from a little boy. I never knew any bad of him," said Tim.

"But he needs to be touched up a wee bit in spots, I doot."

"How? Why? What's the matter with the spots?"

"Why, man, yon preacher has spots, dinna ye ken? He's ignorant o' the Scriptures. An' he thinks works mak' a man reelegious. I wish I had your opportunity. I'd mak' somethin' o' him."

"What would you do with him first?"

"I'd marry him to a lass I ken. They're made for each ither. He'll have her some day. But he's goin' to mak' her wait too long, I doot."

Tim laughed and answered, "I don't know you, and you may be the best match-maker in the world, but I think you'd find this particular one the hardest you ever tackled."

"Hush! Hist, man, I'll tackle yon trout. There's a big one juist there. Turn the boat so ma shadow can't fa' on him. There, hold her so."

At the spot they had reached, the road runs close to the river on the north side. There is a little village there, called The Falls, and, of course, a Falls Tavern. The stream is swift and shallow at that point, while across on the south side it is deep, and the current pushes up hard against the bank, and is filled with little eddies. The shade from the big elms on the bank above, falls in the morning on that deep current. Just as the boat shot into the shade, came Henderson's sudden exclamation. Tim manoeuvred the boat, and the Scotchman made cast after cast, but without a rise. But he was not discouraged. He knew every trick of the fisherman's art.

"Put me ashore," he ordered, and Wendell obeyed.

There was red clover in blossom on the bank, and a big bumble-bee buzzing around. Henderson caught that bee in his hat, pulled a darning-needle out of his

fly-case, ran it through the bee, made it fast with a horsehair, came back to the boat, put the new device on his snell in place of the fly, and made another cast. The bee hardly struck the water when there was a swift rush, a great splash, and Henderson had the fish hooked. But he forgot the sort of boat he was in,—as I had feared he would. He bent out a little too far, when the fish tried to double on him, and the boat capsized.

Wendell was equal to the emergency. He first righted the canoe, then managed to secure the oars, the lunch-basket, the paddle, and various other effects, and dragged them ashore. Turning to look for Henderson, he saw him standing almost up to his arms in water, fighting with that fish the greatest trout battle he had ever fought. He backed very slowly toward the shallow water, swaying, turning, bending, slipping on the stones of the river bottom, but his eye was never off his line. It was a half hour before he came near the bank, and Tim put out with the canoe and landing-net, and the victory was won. But Henderson was not only soaked, but shivering, from his long battle in the cold river.

Tim held up the fish. It was larger than the one taken the night before, and the needle was wedged across its jaws so that it could not be shaken out. Henderson looked at his prize with intense satisfaction for a moment, and then said, "He was richt, lad, in Jersey City, yon time, the preacher man. I thought he was leein', but he wasna. No, he wasna. But it's shiverin' I would be, I doot."

"We'll soon fix that," said Tim. "There's the Falls Tavern. It's comfortable there. We'll get a big fire on the hearth, and hot drinks, which will set us right."

"Aye, lad, we'll go to yon tavern, an' the hot fire an' the hot drinks will be gey fine—an' we'll put a drop of Scotch whiskey in the drink. I'm nae inebriate, but I ken when I need Scotch whiskey."

"Well, I guess you've earned your right to the spirits by your work in landing that fish," was Tim's generous comment.

"Wasna that fine?" said Henderson. "I telt the preacher laddie that I was the best fisherman in two states. An' I am. Ye ken it. Ye couldna hae dune yon trick."

They had reached the tavern, and the big fire had been started. Hot tea had been brought, and Henderson poured liberally into each cup from his own whiskey-flask. The landlord spread their wet coats and woollen shirts close to the fire, wrapping each man in a big buffalo-robe. As they sat watching the fire, Henderson broke out all at once, "Man, are ye releegious?"

Startled by the abrupt question, Wendell answered, "That depends on what you mean by religion."

"No, it don't," the Scotchman almost shouted. "Ye ken whether ye're releegious or no, no matter what I mean by it. Are ye releegious?"

"Well," Tim answered, "if by religion you mean 'pure religion before God even the Father, which is to visit —'" but he got no further.

"Losh, man, it's you, then," he broke in. "I ken ye; ye're the very man. I hoped ye were. I thought ye were. I've been wantin' to get at ye. Ye're not a church member; ye mak' no profession o' releegion. Ye go talkin' o' works, an' ye've no releegion, not a hap'orth."

"What do you know about me?" Tim said innocently.

"Everything aboot ye. Ye're the infidel, ye're the man that says God doesna care what a man believes. Ye say, what God cares aboot is whether a man wears boots too tight for his feet or no."

"You and the parson must have talked about me pretty steadily last night," said Tim, "but I did not think he would call me an infidel."

"Oh, ye're wrang, all wrang. We didn't talk aboot ye last nicht. I kent all aboot ye before. I heard all aboot ye last winter in New Orleans."

Then Tim was wicked. "My friend," he said, "the water in the river, or the whiskey in the bottle, has been too much for you. Or perhaps it is the fire. I haven't been in New Orleans since before the war, and those who knew me are dead. Don't you want to lie down and rest?"

"I rest!" roared Henderson. "Do I luik like a man that water can muddle, or whiskey can addle, or fire can faze? An' I'm no leein'. I did hear aboot ye in New Orleans. I was at the St. Charles Hotel last winter. At dinner, a travelin' man, seated at the same table wi' me, began talkin'. I asked him, as I ask almost everyone, if he was reelegious. He said he wasna, an' he only kenned two men who were. Then I telt him he might add another tae his list, for I was, an' probably more so than either of his two. When I asked him who they were, he said they both lived in Greenton, and one o' them was you. That young man's name was Joe Smith. What hae ye to say noo?" he ended triumphantly. "Are ma brains diluted, or is ma truth drunk?"

Tim did not know just what to say, and before his answer was ready, Henderson resumed:

"Floored ye! Got ye on the first cast! Dinna ye ken ye'll never go to heaven?"

Then Tim answered quickly enough, "I don't want to go to the heaven you are thinking of."

"Dinna want to? Dinna want to go to heaven? Why? Tell me that, man; why, now?"

"Because I prefer to have heaven come to me," Tim retorted. "I want to fasten on a good large piece of heaven before I die, then I can take it along with me. See?"

"No, I dinna see. Ye'll never go to heaven, Mr. Wendell. Ye're a lost soul. Ye're an infidel."

Tim thought to humor his companion, for he was enjoying the whole episode. So he answered, "Perhaps I never shall get into heaven, as you say, but I'm getting a good bit of heaven into me every day. What do you mean by an infidel? The word means unfaithful. I'm not unfaithful to my wife, or my family, or my business, or my creditors, which is more than can be said for many Christians. What is a Christian? Do you know?"

Henderson began to get a little warm. "Do I ken? Who does, if I dinna? A Christian is a man who's got releegion; a man who professes Christianity, ye ken; a man who belongs to the church and kens his catechism; a man —" and he would have continued, but Tim was laughing so loudly he couldn't finish. Henderson gave him a look of infinite pity, and then said, "Are ye dry?"

"No," Tim answered, "I drank enough tea and whiskey, and I have that boat to paddle home, and I'm not going to try to do it, drunk."

"Tea and whiskey? What's that to do with your bein' dry or no bein' dry?" he said. "If ye're dry, I

want to see ye cast for trout over yonder. I hear ye're a great fisherman. Ye may be, but ye're no so guid as I, an' ye're a mighty poor boatman."

"All right," said Tim. "I'll try to find a safer boat." He did not relish the thought of being dumped into the stream again.

Henderson was quick as a lawyer with his objection. "But yon boat is safe enough. Ye're the only unsafe element in this excursion. An' ye a fisherman, an' afraid of a little water! I dinna care if ye did capsize me wi' your blunderin'. I'll row the little boatie, an' ye do the castin', an' I'll no tip ye oot, as ye did me. I'm a better oarsman than ye, I doot."

But Tim was inflexible, and the Scotchman, growling, assented at last. Tim found an old flat-bottomed boat, and gave Henderson the oars. He rowed upstream for a mile, and then, holding the boat steady with the oars, let her drift slowly on the current.

"Now show what ye can do," he ordered. Tim cast, and cast, and cast, trying fly after fly, but in vain. Not a trout rose. They had floated halfway back to the Falls Tavern, when Henderson suddenly began pulling up-stream again until he reached the spot where Tim had begun. Then he dropped the oars and took up his own rod, adjusting a fly and a dropper. "Look here," he said, "ye unbeliever; I'll show ye how to cast." Back went his arm; out went the line; those two flies dropped down on the water as if they were real living things. Not an inch of the line touched the water anywhere. As he began to skim the flies back toward him, there were two breaks in the water. He struck with beautiful skill. His reel whizzed for a minute, as if the fish would go off with all his line in spite of him. Carefully he touched the drag and

began to play his fish. He had two fast. As he brought them in, he said, "Oh, ye beauties, ye ken the difference twixt a Christian an' an infidel." Placing them in his creel, he cast again with the same marvelous skill, getting the same reward.

Then Tim spoke: "Mr. Henderson, you beat the world. I give up all pretensions. I have never seen your equal with rod and reel."

Henderson interrupted him. "Man, didna I tell ye so? Ye didna believe it whiles. But I kent it, man, I kent it."

Tim paid no attention to the conceit. He went on, "I can take trout in the brooks, but none in this river. You are a wizard. You call me infidel. I'll call you a Scotch wizard."

"Man, I'm a Christian. I'm no wizard. Doesna the guid Buik say, 'A man that hath a familiar speerit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death'? I haena a familiar speerit, an' I amna a wizard, or I wad hae been put to death. But I'm a great fisherman."

"That you are," said Tim. "Come, cast again now, in that eddy there."

But Henderson would not. He answered, "Nae, I must na. We've enough for the day. It's no weel to kill too many."

Tim begged to try just once more. "Let me see you do it once more. Perhaps I can learn."

"Na, ye canna learn. Ye're no fisherman. Ye cast very pretty like, but ye're not a Christian. I am. D' ye ken that a fish is the sign o' Christianity?"

Lying down on his back in that old scow, Tim Wendell laughed until he was tired. Then he said, "Mr. Henderson, you're worth while. I wish you

were a preacher. I'd go to hear you. I would, on my honor."

"Hoots, man! Infidels have no honor," and he picked up the oars and rowed back to the Falls Tavern.

VIII

MY JABBOK

MY sermons were never made. The day passed, leaving no results in form of preparation for the service of the Sabbath. My brain had baffled me. It would not obey the behests of the will and act in lines coherent and related. Henderson had come in just at nightfall, and presently tea was served. He wanted to talk. That his story of the day would be worth hearing, I well knew. But, too absorbed in self to be an interested listener to the best of stories, I was only able to maintain creditably an external courtesy, and as soon as supper was over I excused myself, in spite of his protests, and, leaving him to my mother, shut the door of the study upon the whole outside world. If it had been possible to escape from the duty of preaching next day, I would have done it. Such a thought was folly. The hours were relentless. To-morrow was coming fast, and my weary brain was at the point of frenzy. A crisis of some sort was at hand, and, illogically enough, I fancied Henderson to be the cause. That made me almost hate him.

I did not understand clearly then what I was to learn later, that psychologic moments for upheaval or for crystallizations of life and character must come. One of these moments had come that night to me.

To account for the experiences of that night is even

now difficult. My brain was not under the spell of any hallucination. Logic is one thing. Its laws we know. But the psychologic is vastly different. Some of its phenomena defy law. To me, sitting alone, my life and the bearing of it on the church in Greenton were the only subjects that the mind presented. My pastorate of that church had lasted now for almost three years; but the results shown by those years, along spiritual lines, had been but meagre. Everything moved as everything had done during the years preceding my installation. Now and then there were accessions enough to the church, by letter, to keep the membership undiminished in spite of natural losses. But there were no conversions. Of course, this had troubled me much. There were hours at "The Castle of Indolence," while Tim would be off alone with his gun, when no thoughts would come to mind but of the spiritual conditions in the church. But these hours of introspection brought no satisfaction. The religious condition of the town had been in my thought through the whole winter. But no plan for effecting betterment had appeared. All that day I had worked in vain. Sermon-thought would not come. Commentaries and books of sermons had served no purpose. Many pages, destroyed almost as soon as written, had been of no avail. The only sentence that memory has kept, out of that day's suffering, is one which all day long kept ringing in my ears as if spoken by a voice, "Your church is spiritually dead, and your ministry is a failure." The change to the supper-table had brought no relief, and, now that it was past, the dull, heavy grind of the day began again. The effort to work had just begun when a knock at my door called me.

"Is that you, mother?" I asked.

"Does a knock so big as mine sound like a woman's?
I'm no your mither, I doot."

"Oh, it's Mr. Henderson, is it?"

"Who else would it be but me?" he answered.

"What do you want?"

"Come oot, man. Let me enliven ye wi' a wee bit
conversation."

"No: it's too bad to seem discourteous, but there's
work to be done now."

"It'll be bonnie the nicht on yon porch, wi' the
cigars, I doot."

"Yes, bonnie for you, good friend." My voice
sounded unnatural to me. "But not for me. You
must excuse me. There's work to be done."

"An' ye'll no burn incense for an hour? Incense
to old Izaak, ye ken?" Then he added, "Man, ye're
takin' life too hard. Ye'll never succeed in this way.
Ye're law-breakin' if ye work the nicht."

"What laws?" I asked impatiently. More than
before I was charging my wretched failure of the day
to David Henderson.

"The law of work, man," he answered. "Doesna the
Scripture say, 'Work while the day lasts'? Ye worked
the day, an' ye'll be wrang if ye work the nicht."

"Well," said I testily, "it's better to be wrong
to-night working, and right to-morrow preaching,
than right to-night smoking, and wrong to-morrow
from failing in my pulpit. I must write one sermon
to-night."

"Do ye read your sermons?" said he.

"Yes."

"An' there ye're contrary to Scripture, too," he
said.

“How? What Scripture?”

“Why, the Scripture says, ‘he that runneth may read,’ and ye can’t run in the pulpit, man. Ye may storm around a bit, but ye canna run.”

And with that I laughed for the first time that day.

“You are beyond me,” I said. “But I can’t join you. Go smoke. Go burn your incense. There’s work to be done.” And at that he went away.

All that talk had been through the closed door. I did not dare to open it, knowing well that would mean yielding to his temptation. So the door remained shut, and I remained there alone with my misery.

When he had gone, my first impulse was to analyze the situation—to seek the cause of the unspiritual church. Was it so because of an unspiritual membership, or must the secret be found in my own soul? Was that unspiritual? There came the sudden consciousness that a court of judgment had been opened in my life, of which I was both judge and jury, and that conscience as accuser stood before the judgment seat to arraign me.

“Begone,” I cried, but the stern prosecutor would not be deterred from duty by my bluster.

Steadily she pressed the charge:—“You, yourself, have not been a spiritually minded man.”

The indictment made me recoil in spiritual pain. For a little time the conflict was intense, my whole nature protesting. “No, no, no! I am not unspiritual.” In the midst of the struggle a picture framed itself clearly upon my mental background. A long valley lay between rough and towering mountains. A stream, swift and turbulent, brawled through it. The hour was midnight, and the moon had not yet risen above

the enclosing heights. By the bank of the stream, a man was pacing nervously under the stars. His head was bowed. His hands were clasped behind him. His step was regular and strong, but he paused at intervals, as if debating some great question. Suddenly out of the darkness another figure arose unsummoned, and was upon the midnight pacer with an onset violent as that of a mortal foe. For hours the two men struggled without advantage to either, now down to the very bank of the stream, now back again into the darker, deeper shadows of the giant oaks. There could be no mistaking the picture. It was Jacob and his mysterious foe. It was myself and my accusing conscience. I paced the room, trying thus to drive away memory and imagination.

"This is a morbid waking dream," I said, but it would not go. A voice kept sounding through me, "This is your Jabbok. Before the morning dawns, you will have had your struggle and your defeat or victory." And below this growing conviction was another deeper one—the conviction that the end would determine my whole after ministry.

To take the Bible and reread the thrilling story was the work of but a few minutes. Its import struck home then for the first time. Here was the story of the soul that achieves conquest over itself. Again I saw the man; saw him through those long night hours; saw him as the day broke, when victory came. At night he had been beset with fears, and the coward spirit made him dread that sure-coming morrow. In the dawning he was calm and ready for what that morrow would bring. Once more I read the story, and read it yet again, and then, as if I myself were the lone struggler, I fell upon my knees.

What was this? Was it reaction from an worked brain? Was it morbid sensibility clutch at nerves overstrung in moments of introspect? Would those nerves snap presently and leave me a violin of which the strings were broken? Little little the tension lessened. Slowly there came consciousness that self-upbraiding for spiritual fail was worse than useless. God wanted of me cons tion, and not remorse. Reproaches would not the errors of the past three years. It was not v ing passion, but courageous action, that God w have. My sinful omissions had not made others fer, save that in this one matter of personal work sinners I had allowed souls to go out into the invi loneliness without an insistent effort to save them had defrauded no one, as had that wrestler in mountain gorge, nor had I, like him, been false in to any. No one could point to my example in p action, nor in personal habit, and say, "You sta me in evil."

But in spite of all that, conscience was facin like a stern accuser. One by one my public perf ances passed in review; none could accuse m slighting or neglecting them. Yet conscience re not of these things, but, like a sword, plunged he to the hilt into my soul. The names and faces of rose before me—men who should have been rebu but had not been, because I had not dared. I was Mr. Hobart, who should not have been rec into the church until he had given evidence th had consecrated himself to Jesus Christ. His r tion into membership had only brought reproach religion, since people knew he was pretending what he was not. There was Elder Harfis, gro

rich and mean at the same time, while men were openly questioning which would be the greater, his riches or his meanness. No word had been said to him. Nor had I confronted Elder Martin with the fact that there were people who would not partake of the communion, lest they might be compelled to receive the bread and wine from his hands; people who had not even been present on our sacramental days through my whole ministry, because they knew his immoral life and worthlessness. For these things conscience came upon me, as a pack of hounds swoops down upon a fox driven from cover, and it was clear she meant to bring these sins to their death-hour in my life. I trembled before conscience, for I was afraid.

Oh, those hours upon my knees, alone! Hot tears rained down my face, while the night wore slowly on. The sounds of Saturday night in our little city had grown still. The country people had driven away to their homes. The shoppers from the foundry and the mills had bought their week's supplies and gone to their beds. The giddy girls who floated along the streets in search of something exciting, enlivening, or laugh-awakening, had gone their ways. The lights were going out here and there. I stood before my window now, and saw men come out of Bob's tavern. Jimmie MacNaughton went shambling past my house toward his home, moving like a vessel on an unquiet sea. Poor Jimmie! Remonstrance had helped him none. He needed to be taken with a strong hand and told, "You must leave whiskey alone, or leave the sacramental bread and wine alone." The outlook from the window was no relief. I turned once again to my chair and to my knees. But this time my face was lifted to God, and the song of the Psalmist was on my

lips, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help." And blended with it strangely enough was the prayer of the publican,— "God be merciful to me, a sinner."

Soon there came an awful sense of how long a lonely night can be. Nights of gentle sleep, when health is perfect and no dull care disturbs, pass like the swift movements of the dreams that flit through them. But nights when every string of the soul is keyed to its last ability to bear; when sleep has fled to other hearts where tension is unknown; when God has laid His wrestling hand upon a life and brought it to know that its crucial hour has come—nights such as these are foretastes of a pain-filled eternity. They are the monuments of great soul crises; and this was mine. Abraham's "horror of great darkness" was the hour when the "burning lamp and the smoking furnace passed between the pieces" of his sacrifice, but it was the hour also of the great Covenant of Jehovah. This was my horror of great darkness, and out of it came my covenant of power.

I went once more to the window. The lights were out in Bob's tavern now. There would be no more wretches sent out reeling into the night to find their way to homes cursed by the poverty which their drinking made. A sense of the vastness of God's universe came over me, and called me out under the open sky. It was long past midnight. Not a cloud fleece was anywhere. Stars, stars, stars! How far away they were! I wondered that men ever came to know them, and that human genius had been able to make them reveal the history of their origin. Then came with overpowering force the thought that their origin was in the creative word of God. And this was He whom

men say they love and serve ; this was He for whom my own service had been so poor ; this was He who had become manifest in the flesh that out of that manifestation man might be saved. Out under the stars on Greenton Common, with the church rising on my left hand and Bob's tavern down there on my right, symbols of good and evil over against each other, I cast myself down on the ground by a little elm which Wendell had planted the day of my installation. At the foot of that strange oratory I pleaded with God as never before. The sense of time and place passed. To my ears, almost oblivious to all things of sense, there came suddenly the sound of footsteps ; before my eyes there rose out of the darkness the figure of a man coming toward me—the figure of Joe Smith. But he was not in Greenton. Was my brain reeling ? Believing it an apparition, and in superstitious dread, I ran with all speed back into the house, up to my own room, and threw myself down by the bed, praying, crying again, "Oh, that I knew where I might find Him," yet knowing that it was He Himself struggling with me for the entire mastery over my will. I longed with great longing to surrender, but my stubborn will would not yield. Agony—agony—agony, in every fibre of my being. The only refuge was in prayer, and the more earnest the prayer the deeper was the agony. I cried for forgiveness, but knew the cry inadequate. Then a voice seemed to say, "It is not forgiveness that you need, but to be panoplied for the struggle to which you are being called in this hour of the unseen cross. It is not forgiveness, but the great indwelling in your whole being of the Almighty God. Cry for His blessing. Cry for His power." Then I obeyed.

In at my window came the first gray streaks of dawn. Surely the crisis was at hand, if this was Jabbok. If the day came and my struggle had not ended in victory, my case was hopeless. My ministry in Greenton would have to end, a thought that brought new grief. And then:—oh, wonderful, but true! there fell upon my spiritual ears the sound of the same voice that Jacob heard, “Let me go, for the day breaketh,” and I answered, too filled with emotion to more than whisper, “I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me.” And then, suddenly, peace like a river flowed into my heart. I knew that my Jabbok, like Jacob’s, had ended in victory.

My mother waked me. She had come softly into the room, and was standing over the bed. The sun was streaming in at the window. “You sleep soundly this morning, dear boy,” she said. “You must have been up late.”

“Yes, mother, later than usual.”

“Is it all right? Are you ready for the day?” she asked tenderly.

“Yes, it is all right. I am all ready.”

Then saying, “Breakfast is waiting,” she kissed me and was gone.

IX

NO BENEDICTION SUNDAY

THE church was packed. Every place where a person could sit was filled. Men who had not been in church for years were there. People of other congregations had left their own churches for the day. The galleries had not a single vacant seat. In the pew with the dear mother were Mr. Henderson; a burly gentleman who, though an entire stranger to me, was evidently known to my guest, as they were whispering together; and Joe Smith, whose presence startled me, while it confirmed the impression made upon me while I knelt by the elm under the stars. That he should be in Greenton was not strange, but that he should have been out on the Common after one o'clock at night was a puzzle.

The cause of the crowd was Henderson. A certain countryman, driving into Greenton, had passed the spot where the canoe upset, just as Wendell had dragged his boat ashore. A word or two had put this farmer in possession of the story, and he had repeated it at Bob's tavern; so the whole town knew it. The crowd had gathered to see Henderson, and not to hear a sermon.

And yet, though my guest was the occasion, the cause was of God. He was about to give me a great opportunity. This was another phase of the wonders of the last twelve hours. My crisis had passed. Greenton's was about to come.

Just before sermon-time, Tim Wendell entered, bringing a chair, which he placed in the aisle near the entrance. That pleased me greatly, for it was wholly unusual, and he had come without solicitation.

The experience of the night had given me the text that I announced: *Isaiah 21: 11, 12*, "Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh." To recall the words of the address now, after many years, is impossible. But I remember its general trend. Its beginning and ending are indelibly fixed.

"For three years, nearly, I have been with this church as pastor; I have never seen such a sight as greets me this morning. I have as a watchman watched the ways and acts of this whole community, but have seen nothing to make me expect such a congregation as is gathered here to day. Do not for one moment suppose that your preacher thinks this is a tribute to him or his power. He knows better. You have assembled, not because you have a burning desire to hear the gospel, but because you wish to see a man who has done unusual things here in the last two days. That wish I propose to gratify now. He is here in church, just as you expected, but you did not anticipate the good opportunity I am about to give you." Bending over to my guest, I said, "Mr. Henderson, these people have gathered here to see you. They care nothing at all about a sermon to-day. Will you please stand up?"

Henderson promptly complied, and to my surprise began to speak. "I am a Presbyterian," he said, "an elder in a Presbyterian church. I am glad to see so large a congregation. I have been told your preacher is a guid man, though not much of a sermonizer; but if he keeps on as he has begun this morning, he will

give us something to think of that we have never had before, I doot."

Having spoken thus, he resumed his seat, and I my address.

"Mr. Henderson has aided me unwittingly. He has just now done so unusual a thing as to strengthen my opinion that we will all remember this day as the most unusual in the history of the Greenton Presbyterian Church. Let me repeat the cry of the text, 'Watchman, what of the night?' It is with great regret that I omit the answer, 'The morning cometh.' That which must be said is, 'The night is long and the hours are dark.' Let no one go away to-day saying, 'The preacher must have had a bad night'; or 'He had the blues'; or 'He has been a great scolder to-day.' No one of those things is true. The preacher's last night was the most blessed of all his life; there are no depressions in his soul this morning; there are impressions deep and strong; not a word that shall be spoken will be in the spirit of the scold. The words of the hour will be plain, probably fearfully plain, but out of a heart that loves you with its every pulsation. This is the turning point in this pastorate. To-day will see the morning begin to come, or it will mark the beginning of the end between you and me."

I paused a moment. I saw that my mother was very pale, and that Henderson's face was fixed on mine with a tremendous earnestness, while his little Scotch eyes were open wider than I supposed possible. The house was intensely still.

The next words would have been heard almost if they had been whispered. "The night is long, and the hours are dark. For twenty years there has not been a single spiritual movement in this church. We

have all of us for the past three years been in a spiritual stupor.

"About eight months ago, toward the last of October, three men, strangers to each other, happened to sit at night in adjoining chairs on the veranda of a hotel in the city of New Orleans. One was from Massachusetts; one from Pennsylvania; the third from Virginia. One was a Presbyterian; one was an Episcopalian; the last was a go-as-you-please, free-and-easy man of the world, who strangely enough turned the conversation into religious channels, and, drawing from his own experience, said that church members as a rule were shams. He declared he knew only two men who were what he called religious; one of them made no profession of religion, and would not even go to church, and was regarded by his fellow-townsman as a lost sinner. Naturally, a hot discussion followed such a speech. The other two men declared he was not right, but he stuck to his proposition. He said he knew a church which lately had been joined by a man who had no more religion than an oyster: he gave his name, told where he lived, said he was intemperate, profane, and a religious humbug generally. He insisted that this man, as far as he could see, was a fair sample of the church member. One of the others combated this with such earnestness that the conversation lasted until midnight, and ended without reaching any settled conclusion. That's the way with discussions, as a rule. The more men discuss any proposition, the tighter will each participant hold to his own opinions.

"Do not think this a preacher's romance. Truth is not more true. I could give you the names of the men I speak of. I have said that they settled nothing.

But what they failed to settle, I myself have settled. The indictment brought by the non-church-member was both true and false.

"It was false because he does not know all churches and all towns. The town of which he spoke was small enough for him to have a fair knowledge of its people, or at least of its business people. In that very town there are some devoutly pious, holy women, and probably one or two men in every one of its churches who are really religious men. But the fearful indictment, after all its falsity is allowed, is yet far too true; and of Greenton, as I know, it is very true.

"Ever since I learned of that New Orleans episode I have been watching the people of this town. There's many a professor of religion among you who does not possess a particle of it, judging by your lives. There are men here, just like that one of whom the New Orleans stranger spoke—men with no more religion than an oyster."

Again I paused. Wendell's face was fairly shining. He was leaning forward, listening intently. There was a rustle of people moving for rest, then once more dead silence.

"Don't forget," I went on, "that church-membership and salvation are not identical. Salvation means that a man has been saved out of and away from sin. Away with the thought that it means saved into the special privilege of sinning. Salvation does not mean that a whiskey bottle, that was not respectable when a man was outside the church, becomes so when he gets inside.

"The frauds scattered about in churches here and there deceive no one. If they happen to be rich, their money may keep them in the church, but your

out-in-the-world-profess-nothing man laughs them and the church to scorn. Is A or B or C a Christian? Go ask the question at the Greenton Club, if you wish to know. Its members can tell you. Go ask the club steward. He will know.

"An honest, out-and-out wicked man, making no profession, will never hurt religion. Sometimes some of these men who move in respectable society are asked to enter the church. They never will. It is possible to respect such men. Let me illustrate.

"The last time I was in New York, I called on a friend of mine, a business man who is 'in Wall street,' as the saying goes. I asked him why he was not a Christian. Said he, 'For two reasons. First, there are so many shams in this whole Christianity business, that I will not have anything to do with it. Second, I myself cannot be a Christian. I ought to be, for the sake of my children. I do want to be, sometimes; but when I face the proposition coldly, I back down. I'm in Wall street. I have to be. I gamble in futures all the while. I bought a million in "Erie" last week. All the money I had in the world was thirty thousand dollars. I sold to-day at a handsome profit. Now, if I were to become a Christian, I should have to stop all that sort of thing. And I cannot.'

"That man was wrong: dead wrong. But he was too honest to become a sham Christian, as some before me now have done. Let me give you an illustration of a different sort.

"There was once a whiskey distiller in central New York. He was growing rich from his business. But he came under powerful conviction of sin. He had the same fight that the broker is having. It was 'Christ and no whiskey,' or 'Whiskey and no Christ.' Christ

won. He rolled his barrels into the street, knocked in their heads, broke down his still, and made a profession of religion. He did more. He began living that religion out before men, so that everyone could see it, and that was worth while. Profession meant something to that old whiskey distiller. But there are people before me now to whom it means nothing. Some of you belong to this church; some of you belong to other churches in this city, where you ought to be now, instead of here out of sheer curiosity.

“The night is long, and the hours are dark. I am speaking in almost broken-hearted love. Probably I myself am in fault that after three years of ministry here the dawn has not yet begun to break. But it shall break for me, God willing—if not here, then elsewhere. Let me come near to your lives.

“What made you join the church? Did you want a passport to respectability? You will obtain it, if you have money enough. The men who keep their religion in their pocketbooks can tell you how much it will cost. Did you want entrance to the best society? Did you want to be in the swim? Did you think society would admit you to its inner shrine because in its fashionable presence you walked down the church aisle to make a profession of your faith?”

I saw Hobart, whose seat was conspicuous, turn very red and shake his head as if in anger. It was something to have assurance that one shot had hit the mark. Hobart’s head-shake did not stop me. I went on:

“Profession that has no basis is a lie—the worst sort of lie, for, being lived daily, it can never be put out of sight. A spoken lie may be forgotten after a while, but a lived one keeps right on acting itself out

every day. A generous-hearted young fellow looks at one of you lie-livers, and says, 'I will not be like that; I will have none of that nonsense charged up against me.' There's a man in this town who talks like that. You call him an infidel. He is not. He is one of God's exemplars of pure and undefiled religion. You men who masquerade as Christians, but who are really hypocrites, think your real characters are not known. But you are not partridges. There are no social thickets into which you can run for cover. The underbrush of the social world was long since cleared away. Some one is always sure to see. Some one has seen you and has talked about you, for the church about which those three men talked in New Orleans, that night eight months ago, was this very church.

"And now this sermon and this service are ended. The night is long and the hours are dark. Whether the watchman shall ever cry 'The morning cometh,' God knows. It rests with you. I cannot ask you to join in a closing hymn. You would not mean its words if you sang them. I cannot say, 'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with you all.' You do not wish for any fellowship of that Holy Spirit. There is no use in asking God's blessing upon you in benediction. He will not bless you. The service is ended."

I left the pulpit, stepped into the little room behind it, took my hat, walked back into the church and down to my mother's pew.

"Come, mother; come, Mr. Henderson," I said. "We will go."

The stillness of that congregation was like that of solitude. We three walked down the aisle. Tim Wendell, who was by the door, slipped out and waited

for us in the vestibule. Not another person in the church even rose from his seat. As we passed Wendell, he said, "God bless you, my boy : you'll need it; you'll need it badly."

"He has, Tim," I answered, "He has already. I have had my Jabbok."

No one of us spoke a word, as we walked the short distance to the house. I went to my study for a few moments, as was my custom. I should have been tremulous and fearful, I suppose; but instead there was a sense of great spiritual exaltation, and I knew the Angel of the Covenant had been at my right hand.

At dinner Henderson was the first speaker. "Ye didna read the sermon, the day I doot."

"No," I answered.

"No, ye didna read," he said again. "An' ye didna run, man, ye didna run." And that gave my mother her voice. She could not trust herself before.

"My boy," said she, "how did you dare? You cannot remain here as pastor any longer now. Your people will not bear that. You will have to go away, and you will have to go alone. I am too old to leave the old home. The roots of my life have gone down too deep."

There were tears in her voice, though her self-control was steady. Henderson answered for me.

"Don't trouble, madam," he said, more gently than I could have imagined possible. "Yon speech will keep him here for fifty years, if he will stay so long. But he willna need to stay. Pulpits will be open to him everywhere." Then, with a sharp glance at me, "I don't agree wi' his basal principle, ye ken. It is works. An' that isna good doctrine; it is believin' that counts. But in spite o' that error, I tell ye,

madam, this day has made a man oot o' your boy. I told him the morn, at breakfast, ye ken, to go it loose the day, and he did wi' a vengeance."

The Greenton Presbyterian Church was composed very largely of Heidelberg Confession Dutch. They were slow and stubborn people. What they had been wont to have, they insisted they always must have. To disperse from a church service without a benediction was a thing unheard of and impossible. I was not astonished at what happened.

Dinner was nearly finished, when the door-bell rang. The spokesman of the three men at the door explained that they were a committee from the congregation.

"Pastor," he said, "the people say they never went out from church on Sunday without a benediction, and they cannot go now. Not a soul has left. Those two strangers are in your pew yet. They want you to come over and dismiss them."

"No," I answered. "God will not give His benediction to people who honor Him with their lips, but whose heart is far from Him. I cannot go over."

When, about an hour afterward, another committee came, they found me still fixed in my purpose. Having begun an heroic experiment, I was intent on carrying it through to the end.

At two o'clock another committee came. "Are the people still there?" I asked.

"Yes, pastor." It was Elder Harfis who led this committee.

"What are they doing?" I said.

"Discussing the sermon, discussing you; three or four have prayed. They do not want to go without a benediction." But I could send back no other message.

At three another committee came, and at four o'clock another. Henderson heard the voices and came to their help.

"Ye'd better go, lad, I doot," he said.

"I cannot, Mr. Henderson. I thought you were a fisherman."

"So I am. What's that got to do wi' it?"

"I'm a fisher of men, Mr. Henderson. I made my cast this morning. It's not yet time for the landing-net."

At five o'clock another committee came. Strange committee it was: Joe Smith, Jimmie MacNaughton, and Elder Harfis. Joe pleaded for the people. Then I yielded.

Present again with the congregation, I said:

"There will be no service here to-night. I want you to go home and spend this night in prayer. Tomorrow morning at six o'clock, I will preach in this place. Let no one come to that service, save those who have been on their knees before God, those who are penitent and ready to renounce their sins. Now I will dismiss you with a benediction."

But the words of that benediction I had never spoken before, nor have they crossed my lips at any time since.

"And now may the convicting and converting power of Almighty God be among you all, to harass and disturb until you repent and are reconciled to each other and to God; and for this end may His grace be with you all. Amen."

That night my mother and I sat in the growing darkness of the long June twilight. Henderson had gone out with the stranger, who had proved to be his friend, Major George Ardman, of New York. There

in the darkness we sat alone, and for long neither of us spoke.

At last my mother said, "Come over here close to me, my boy."

Of course I obeyed.

"How came you to do it?" she said.

Then I told the story of "My Jabbok." And as I told it, I did what I had so often done in the childhood years, knelt by her side, and the tears that could no longer be restrained fell unchecked. Her hand was on my head. Oh, how gently it rested there, and I heard the voice which had sung lullaby in the bygone years saying now with ineffable sweetness the great words which have comforted so many weary hearts:

"Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations: before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting Thou art God. . . . Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee, our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance. . . . Return, O Lord, how long? and let it repent Thee concerning Thy servants. . . . Bow down Thine ear, O Lord, bow down Thine ear and hear us, for our trust is in Thee."

And a great peace filled my soul.

X

HENDERSON RETURNS TO HIS OWN COUNTRY BY ANOTHER WAY

NO one who was present at that early meeting on Monday morning will ever forget it. My guest did not attend. He had explained, the night before, that a business matter would occupy him. That struck me as strange, for I had supposed that his only possible errand in Greenton had been search for sport. He had surely found that. But neither his presence nor absence would affect conditions that morning, for people's thought had become occupied suddenly in a vastly different way. That the church would be full was assured, for two elements of human nature were in operation: the one was curiosity, the other was conviction.

My expectation was realized, for the house was full to the doors. Had it been empty, the silence could not have been more profound. Joe Smith, and Major Ardman, and Tim Wendell, all sat in my mother's pew. Wasting no time with preliminaries, not even pausing to be seated, I faced the congregation and began to sing:

"There is a fountain filled with blood."

The effect was electric. Before the first verse had been sung, men and women were sobbing and singing through their tears. At the end of the hymn, I prayed. As the prayer ceased, before I could begin

to speak, Joe Smith led off with the same great hymn, and once more the congregation sang it all through. During the singing of the last verse, Elder Martin rose and made his way toward the pulpit. When he reached the open space, he looked up at me and said, "Pastor, may I say a word?"

The moment was intense. Every eye was on the man, every ear was waiting my answer. "Yes, Elder Martin," I replied, "you may say what is in your heart."

He was a large man, with a fair face, and his hair was streaked with gray. He had been an elder for more than twenty years. His voice was very low. "I am a sinner," he began. I interrupted him. "Dear elder, we are all sinners." "Oh, no, no," he broke in, "I am *the* sinner. My life has been an insult to truth. I know what I deserve from Almighty God. I have cast myself on His mercy. Now I cast myself on yours. Forgive me, my pastor; forgive me, my friends. You gave me office and I took it at your hands. I have been unworthy; now I give the office back to you. I resign my eldership here. Please accept it, and may God bless you, and have mercy upon me." Then he sat down upon the pulpit stairs utterly heart-broken.

A storm of emotion then would have wrecked the whole movement. To avert it, I plunged into a talk on Tim Wendell's text, "And to keep himself unspotted from the world." It was entirely unpremeditated, but that made no difference. People were there to listen. For a half hour my mouth was filled as a prophet's might have been, and the effect of the message I can never forget. When the address ceased there was absolute silence. Not a soul stirred. For

a quarter of an hour the hush of God was upon every heart. Then a voice began, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise."

The voice was that of a woman. To tell whence it came out of the great throng was impossible. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit," was repeated by another voice, and then by others together, until finally the whole company as one person sobbed out, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit." Then the voice of Major Ardman, deep and strong, took up the strain, "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise," and he followed that with such a prayer as I never heard before nor since.

The next scenes are indescribable. The Holy Ghost came down upon us all. Greenton had never known two such hours in her history.

Mr. Henderson had asked on Sunday night if he could have breakfast at seven o'clock on Monday morning. In his courtly way, he apologized for the unconventional request, and said, "I hae an engagement at eight o'clock wi' 'The Eggleston Foundry and Machine Company' people, and must leave Greenton, if I can, by twelve o'clock, to reach Camblet in time for the airy afternoon train doon." When the meeting was over at half-past eight, I asked Major Ardman home to a cup of coffee with me, but he said, "I must hurry to see the Eggleston people. David is there now. I ought to have been, but I could not deny myself the experience I was sure awaited me in the morning meeting." So the Major went to find Henderson.

At my own breakfast it occurred to me to drive

Henderson and the Major to Salisbury instead of seeing them go off alone to Camb'st. It would relieve the tension of the last forty-eight hours and rest me. The only difficulty would be to get my men before it was too late to make the train at Salisbury. But fortune favored me. About five minutes past ten the two men came together to the parsonage. I made known my plan, told them I would take Joe Smith along for company home, and by ten-thirty we were all seated in a good surrey, bowling along the Greenton River on the road to Salisbury.

No four persons ever had two more pleasant hours. That is one of the most beautiful country drives imaginable. The scenery is varied, and for eight miles one is scarcely out of sight of the peerless river. It is deep and still, under banks shaded by forest trees here; and full of ripples shining and flashing in the sunlight there. Here wide meadows with grazing cattle, and there a village and a mill-wheel tell of life asking the stream for help in the struggle for daily bread. When the road brought us first in sight of the river, as we left Greenton behind, Henderson, roused into animation, broke out with rapturous expressions of delight.

"Yon's a fine stream for trout. 'Tis a pity ye havena a fisherman in your town. Ye say the man Wendell's your best fisherman, an' he canna fish. He might, if he stood by a burn, wi' bait, but he canna cast a fly. An' he canna sit still in a boat. Did ye ken how he tipped me into the river up to my arms, juist as I had fastened that biggest fish? An' I had to play ma trout an' back across that stream at the same time. I almost lost him. No one but a fisherman could have saved him. I tell ye, I'm the great

fisherman! An', man," he finished earnestly, "I'd have ye to know that river's no a hot-air furnace."

There was a great laugh over that speech, with its innocent bluster. When we were still, I said:

"Mr. Henderson, the water of the river is very wet, but you were dry enough when you came to supper."

"Do I luik like a man that would come to supper to a table graced by sic a lady as your mither, wearin' clothes soakin' wet an' in which I had fished a' day?"

"No, you don't. But why didn't you tell us at supper?"

"Man, do ye ask? Who could hae towd ye anythin' at supper that nicht? Your face was as long as a horse's jowl, an' yer mouth shut as tight as the lips o' the Sphinx. Ye wadna talk an' ye wadna listen, an' I was talkin' fine."

"That's so, Mr. Henderson. I was preoccupied. I had been through an unsatisfactory day. But nothing engrosses me now. There's not a single carking care along, and I'll listen—yes, I will. Come, now, what happened to you and Tim?"

"Ye better ask what didna happen, I doot."

"Oh, I know what did not happen. You did not fail as a fisherman. I saw them,—those five fish. They were fine."

Just then we came in sight of the scene of the mishap, and Henderson in real glee shouted, "There, that's it. Yon's the place where I hooked the big one, and juist down there's where I backed ashore, an' yon's the little tavern." And then going on from that point he told in his absurd, but always interesting way, the whole story.

While Henderson talked my own memory was busy with Joe Smith. The coincidence of the two men

meeting in my church, and being together in their present very familiar relation, and with me, impressed me forcibly. As Henderson talked I thought of Joe.

His actions in these two days had shown in him a different mood from any ever seen in him at college. As he had told Henderson, he had been a member of my class, but as he left at the end of Freshman year, our acquaintance was not very intimate. We were members of the same Fraternity, but were not very close friends.

Although Joe was smart, he was not a good student. His standing in the class was low. Utterly unsophisticated, in my Freshman days, and withal of a highly impressionable temperament, Joe shocked me beyond expression. In manner he was uncouth; in dress, slovenly; in thought, coarse; in speech, at times, very profane. He knew more ways of doing nothing, and doing it well, than any other man in college. As the boys said, he always "got there," but where, it would have troubled anyone to tell. When he did arrive, there was never much evidence that he had brought anything with him, or done anything on the way. Although generally regarded as one of the brightest men in the class, there yet was never an occasion on which he shone. He was also widely known as the laziest man there had been in the college for a generation. The college wag was wont to say:

"When Joe Smith begins to declaim, in chapel at rhetorical, all hands can go to sleep—he'll never stop; he's too lazy."

He might have led his class in scholarship. He was too lazy. He might have been the best debater. He was too lazy. He might have been the best all-round athlete, but he scorned the diamond and the gridiron

alike. He was too lazy. He knew it. He was accustomed to boast of it, as his chief and only distinguishing characteristic. He would say:

"After you fellows are all forgotten, I'll be remembered as the laziest man in the college for a century."

Such had been the Joe Smith of college days. Now, after eight years, he had come back into touch with my life. Lately, as he had come to town from time to time, it was evident that some sort of influence was bringing him and me into a mutually closer relation, and the feeling grew that in some way we should greatly affect each other. On this morning's drive to Salisbury, as he sat beside me, this feeling kept forcing itself against my consciousness like a throb of pain.

Mile after mile along the stream we drove, now close to its banks, and now back on the hills. From the summit my guests had their first glimpse of the great Green Mountains. Rupert Mountain, clothed in its garb of enchantment, that translucent azure which is New England's glory, stood straight before us. Mount Anthony loomed grandly up toward the south, as in the days a hundred years before, when Ann Harris and her associates prayed all day in the forest at its foot, that success might crown the efforts of their fathers, sons, husbands, and brothers out on Bennington battle-field.

Henderson talked incessantly. The motion and the pure air were elixir to him. He asked keen and curious questions about the historic spots we passed. I was right glad, for the brisk conversation kept yesterday entirely out of my mind. Nearer and ever nearer came the mountains. The day was superb. The white ships of the sky, with silvery sails glistening, laden with freight of moisture, cast shadows on the

mountainsides, and, floating over, gave ever new and wonderful tints to the whole landscape. Joe Smith would never have been chosen as judge of paintings for an art-gallery exhibit, but the God of his being had breathed into him a soul that loved the beautiful in nature. Frequently he interrupted Henderson's flow of talk with expressions of delight as rapturous as those of a child. It was no wonder. A holiday drive was, to this man of laborious life, a thing unusual ; and this drive was itself unequalled.

The road left the river at last and turned across the plain into which the foothills of the mountains spread. Henderson's exuberance was past. Joe relapsed into silence. The Major took up the conversation :

"How long have you been pastor in Greenton ?" he asked.

"About three years."

"Have you ever thought a time might come when a change of pastorate would be desirable ?"

"Yes. Every young minister must think of that: his limitations in a first pastorate are so great, his real accomplishments so few, and his mistakes so many."

"If a good opportunity should offer for a change, would it be attractive ?"

"Not now. There is a work to do in Greenton which must be done, and which God has surely laid on me. Until it is done, no proposition to change would interest me in the least."

"What's that? Ye wadna go, an ye had a guid opportunity ?" It was Henderson's voice.

"No, I would not."

"An' why no ?"

"There is work to be done which God has laid on me, and which began yesterday morning."

"An' was runnin' awa' from the church beginnin' the work o' God?"

"Yes. He told me to go."

"He towd ye to go, man? An' leave the people undismissed an' unblest, an' ye sittin' quiet in yer hoose?"

"Yes. He told me to go."

"Man, are yer wits wanderin'? Ye played wi' Providence yesterday. He'll no abide ye."

"I think you are wrong, David." The Major was speaking. "Had you been at the early meeting to-day you would not speak as you do."

"Oh, aye. I mind ye said the preacher preached graun' the morn. But the people will forget it a' before the Sabbath. Ye'll have to go, lad. If Geordie Ardman has a church to offer ye, he'd better do it, for ye'll need it ere six months go, I doot."

"No, he won't," said Joe. "I've heard the town talk this morning. He'll never leave here because folks want him to go."

"But didna I hear Mr. Hobart tellin' Bob, when I was askin' for a team and driver to Camblet, that he'd drive the preacher out o' town before the snow flies?"

"Oh, Hobart be —" but Joe stopped short. I knew he meant to swear, and wondered why he did not.

"I'm glad to see, Mr. Smith, that ye respect the preacher if ye dinna fear God," said Henderson.

"See here," said Joe. "Hobart can't drive one of the preacher's old shoes out of Greenton. He'll stay right here, and you'll hear great news from Greenton yet."

Just then the whistle of the down train blew at a station three or four miles from Salisbury. But we

were almost at the end of the drive. Henderson was sitting just behind me. He laid his hand on my shoulder.

"Hear me, man," he said. "I towd yer mither yesterday ye had done a graun' thing. I leed to her juist a bit. It was necessar' to keep her in heart, dear lady. But I fear ye made a mess o' it. Ye won't hear the last o' it. It's no because ye were wrang, but it's because it was an innovation. Presbyterians don't like innovations. But when yer trouble comes, lad, juist let David Henderson know. He'll no see ye suffer for tellin' the truth."

That was like Henderson; and Major Ardman added, "And if you think ere long you would be interested in a proposition for a change, don't fail to let me know." With that they both stepped out on the platform of the station. Just as the train moved off Henderson called from the rear platform, "An' I'll never fish in the same boat with that infidel again. Man, it's dangerous."

And I knew both propositions were true, for Wendell would never trust himself again in a boat with the Scotchman, expert with a rod though he was.

XI

JOE SURPRISES ME

AS we drove down the main street of Salisbury homeward bound, Joe said, "I can make one of 'em out, but I can't the other. That man Ardman is easy. He's big and burly. But did you ever hear such a prayer?"

"I agree with you, Joe. You haven't said all you began to say, but I agree. And yet, old man, I believe Henderson is the better man, because he is the stronger character."

"Why didn't he come to meeting this morning, then? I tell you he's one of those sham elders. He talks a lot, but when it comes down to business, he'll do you every time, or I'm mistaken."

"No, Joe. You're wrong. I agree with you, and I don't, both. I can't make Henderson out yet. But that's the Scotch of it. He pretended that he came to Greenton to fish, but he didn't. He and Ardman met here by appointment, I think. Henderson was over at the Eggleston Foundry early. Ardman joined him there. It has been said for some time in town that the firm was shaky. Henderson told me, last night, what he must do this morning."

"All right. But if you ever see more of him, watch out. That's all I've got to say." Then Joe stopped talking. For three miles he did not speak a word. I tried him on many lines, and finally gave it up. There was a dense grove of white pines about a mile from

the point where the road comes back to the Greenton River. The trees stand very close together, and almost no light streams through. As we drove along past, Joe said suddenly, "Tie the horses, old friend. Let's go in here. I want to talk to you."

"Can't you talk while I drive?"

"No, I can't. I don't want to see a sight but your face and those trees. No one can see us in there but God, and He's all I want to have see us."

The request was strange, but I humored him, and we went into the grove. Taking a seat at the foot of a pine, I waited for Joe. He remained standing, looking intently at me. All at once he said:

"Dominie, get on your knees, facing that tree."

"What's this, Joe?" I said. "Are you crazy?"

"Do it, I tell you," he said. I obeyed him, wondering what whim held him. "Sure as fate," he said, "that was you. That was just the way you looked last Saturday night under the elm on the Common."

"Did you see me out there? Was that you coming when I ran into the house? I thought the figure was a brain spectre. That is why I ran."

"Well, it was I all right," he said. "I had been on a little tear for two days, and I drank too much that night after getting in from the road. I was half drunk. I couldn't sleep. Every time I dozed I would wake dreaming of my old mother. I went out to walk it off. When I saw you under the tree, and you jumped and ran, I thought it was more of the jag. But it wasn't: it was you."

"Yes, Joe, it was I."

"What were you doing out there? Do you do that often?"

"No," I said. And I told him the story.

He seemed profoundly moved. When the narration was finished, he said, "Dominie, will you pray right under this pine for me? I'll watch the horses." So there in the grove I carried that poor soul's case to God.

When the prayer ended, he said, "Say, Dominie, I think the Church is the worst old humbug this side of Erebus. Half its members are shams. I'm afraid that Henderson is, though I don't know. But I'll tell you what I'm going to do." I had never seen him so earnest. "I'm going to join your church before I leave this town. I have given my heart to Christ, and He's no humbug. So into His Church I go, if it will have me."

Our unwillingness to believe in the sincerity of others in the matter of initiative religious experience is very strange. After what had just happened, and with the memory of Joe's singing that morning still fresh, I should have given a hearty "God bless you, dear old Joe." Instead I did not answer at all. Then he spoke suddenly :

"You don't take any stock in that, do you, parson? Known me too long, haven't you? Know how I used to swear, don't you?"

"Why, no, Joe," I answered, with some hesitation. "I take stock in it all right. You did swear hard, I remember; but I take —"

"No, you don't," he interrupted. "You don't stand for me at all. You don't believe in me a little. But I'm honest. Man alive, can't you see I'm in dead earnest? I'm going to be a Christian, if there isn't another but you and Tim Wendell on earth."

"But Tim Wendell is not a Christian," I said.

"Oh, don't, Dominie, don't," he rejoined. "That

sounds too like your Greenton hypocrites. He is a Christian. So are you. So am I going to be—an all-over-er, too. I'm going to be an out-and-out-er, and an in-and-in-er, and a through-and-through-er. I mean to work this clear to the limit."

What kind of stupid reaction had me in control, I cannot imagine. My answer was inadequate to a degree.

"Well," I said, "I hope this is all true. But, Joe, isn't it rather sudden? When did you have a change of heart?"

That speech was unpardonable. But his reply, quick and sincere, began to waken me.

"There," he said, and there was a hurt note in his voice; "I told you that you didn't believe in me. But you may. Sudden? Well, I should say so. Why, I've been shaken up like Saul at Damascus. And when he called out, 'Lord, I want to go to work for you; give me a job,' did the Lord say to him, 'Saul, isn't this rather sudden?' As for a change of heart," he finished, "I don't know when I had it. I expect I've been changing slowly for three years."

"Three years?" I exclaimed. "Why, that is just the time I have been pastor in Greenton."

"Yes. That's just it," he returned. "First trip I made here after you were settled, I met you on the street. Remember? I started going to church right then. You see, I knew you in college for a straight-er. You were a little pitiful green chap when you came, but the fraternity boys thought they saw good points about you and took you in. Well, they found out that you had more points than they reckoned on. Remember the night they tried to make you drink in the lodge room, and you said you'd promised your mother

not to drink, and you'd keep that promise or die? I said to myself then, 'Joe, that chap's green, but he's clear grit.' So, when I found you pastor here, I said, 'I'm going to hear the preacher that had the sand to stand against a whole lodge full, just because he'd promised his mother he wouldn't drink.' I'll tell you true, you couldn't preach much, but you were dead-open-and-shut honest and earnest. Then I got acquainted with Tim Wendell, and he and I talked you over. I began to believe there was something in Christianity. So the years have gone by. I saw old Henderson down in New Orleans. Sometimes I think he's a Christian, other times I think he's not." It seemed that others, then, were puzzled over him even as I was.

"Then," he went on, "you kicked up that rumpus in church yesterday, and all at once this morning I cried out, 'Here I am, Lord: rough Joe Smith; if you can use me, rough as I am, use me. If you must smooth me down, smooth me.' Now, parson, I meant that. I'm in this business to be used. But when it all happened, I don't know. It's been happening ever since I knew you."

That amazing speech was a soul-awakener. I turned to Joe, threw my arms around him, drew him to me, and made with him, in spiritual silence, a covenant which this world will never see broken. This man was the first person to tell me that my life and character had been a lamp to guide his feet on the way to God. I could not speak for a little.

"Joe," I said huskily, "I do believe in you. I'll own to you, I didn't at first, but I do now. My question was wicked. When you became a Christian, suddenly or unsuddenly, makes no difference—you are

one. You shall join Greenton Church as soon as you like."

"Good!" came the dear fellow's answer. "That suits me. I won't be with the church often—can't, you know. But when I am, folks in Greenton will know it."

We went back to the carriage. A silence fell between us as we drove homeward, but it was the silence of communing souls at peace with God.

We passed my home just at supper-time. I asked Joe to stop for tea with us, but he declined.

"No," he said; "I've been gone nearly all day, and must do a little business yet." So I left him at Bob's tavern.

When I told my mother the story of the drive and of Henderson's parting words of discouragement anent the Sunday's work, she answered very gently :

"Neyer mind, dear boy. Whatever happens will be right. God has been with you these last two days, and nothing can go wrong with the man with whom God abides."

"Has anything happened to-day, mother?" I asked. I was very fearful there might have been some reaction since the morning.

"Yes," she answered. "Elder Harfis called twice to see you, and, when he came the second time, seemed much disappointed that you had not returned."

"Did he tell his business?" I asked anxiously. I distrusted Elder Harfis.

"Not one syllable, but I think it was something about the church and yesterday."

That was not reassuring, and ordinarily the thought that at once took form in my mind would have made me uneasy. That the elder had come to tell me that my

services were no longer required at the Presbyterian church seemed probable. But in a soul so spiritually elated as mine over Joe's conversion, there was no room for worry as to what the elder might or might not say when we should meet.

The evening was warm. As we sat upon our porch, the view of the western hills at whose bases the Hudson River flows was transcendently beautiful. I was repeating some lines of Holland's that I loved, when suddenly the church bell began to ring. I started as if from a dream. "What's that for?" I cried. But my mother could not answer me.

Going over to the church at once, I found it fast filling with people.

"What's all this?" I asked the sexton.

"Oh," drawled the old man, "Elder Harfis an' Mr. Smith is goin' to hev a meetin', but I don't know what fer. Ther' was handbills all over taown this afternoon."

Elder Harfis met me as I entered the vestibule. He gave me no opportunity to speak.

"I tried to see you twice to-day," he explained, "but you had gone out of town. Had I found you, we would have had a talk about this meeting, but now it's too late. Joe Smith and I arranged it. He said he wanted to join this church and must tell the people why. I promised to see you about it, but when he went to Salisbury with you, I supposed he'd tell you. Then I didn't see him till half an hour ago, and he said he hadn't told you, but it was all the better, for the meeting was going to be ours, and we wouldn't let you have anything to do with it. So, you see, preacher," he ended with a smile, "you can't go into the pulpit to-night. You sit anywhere. We'll take care of the meeting."

Have you ever seen a cloud full to bursting with rain and just about to break in downpour? Such was that meeting. The elder read the Fifty-first Psalm. Then Joe Smith prayed. Never was such a prayer as his heard in Greenton Church before.

"God, I am not in the habit of praying. I don't know how to do it. I have used your name thousands of times, but I was swearing, and not praying. Now I'm going to change off. I've got to speak to this crowd to-night. I've got to tell them the truth. They've been a lot of humbugs and hypocrites and do-nothings, but they have had a jolt and are looking around to see what's the matter. I want help to tell them the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, as Justice Wendell says. I want you to take care of this meeting, and keep me from being a fool. That is all I have to say now. Amen."

Elder Harfis gave out the hymn, "There is a fountain filled with blood." Joe did not wait for the organ. He began to sing with an earnestness that was not to be mistaken. At the close of the hymn, he spoke.

"I'm no preacher," were his first words, "so I'll take no text. But I know a few words of the English language, and I'm going to use them the best I know how. I never had any use for the Church until I began to hear the Dominie down there preach in this town. That was three years ago. I suppose I've heard seven or eight sermons a year. I've told the preacher I didn't call them very good sermons; but what of that? He's all right, sermons or no sermons, and he proves Christianity every day by his life.

"Yesterday morning, he preached. Yes, he did. He larruped you old hypocrites well. He gave it to you again this morning in good shape, too, and I don't leave myself out either. I got my dose, and I deserved it. I haven't had much use for the Church as I have known it, but I'm going to join this one. The Church, as I see it, is a sham and a humbug. Your church has been a humbug, and you know it. I've been spending Sunday four times a year, for eight years, in this town, and not a man in all Greenton ever asked me into a church, or ever spoke one word to me about my soul, or ever tried to do me any good. Some of you men have taken me into Bob's tavern to drink, thinking if you could get me mellow you could make a better bargain. You've tried to do me all right, but you never once tried to do me good. That's the sort of Christians some of you have been. I don't wonder your faces turn red. Oh, don't look at your neighbor, to see if his face is red. You're the man I mean: and you, and you, and you." Joe's earnestness was good to see.

"Now," he continued, "this church is going to be a better church. Your pastor got loose yesterday. He let the books and the schools go, and he sawed wood. Whenever God sees a preacher sawing wood, He comes right down. He even stands by with a file to keep the preacher's saw sharp. My friend there has had two bouts at his wood-pile, one yesterday and one this morning; and his saw isn't dull yet. I heard that trout-fisher, Henderson, tell him to-day that he'd made a mess of it, and that you would drive him out of this church. Don't you do it. You can't afford that. He's just waked up, and he'll keep you waked up too. And if he don't, I will, for I'm going to join

this church, and I shall be back here just as often as I can, and whenever I come back I'm going to speak in meeting.

"I'm a Christian all right." This was in answer to the blank astonishment on many of the faces before him. "I'm a Saul-of-Tarsus Christian. God shook me up yesterday. Greenton is my Damascus. The Dominie there told me my conversion was sudden. Well, what of it? Is there any law that says God can't do a thing in a hurry, if He wants to? Is a Christian that gives in to Jesus Christ suddenly, any poorer Christian than your mud-turtle, snail-crawler convert? No, he isn't; not one bit poorer. When Saul of Tarsus heard the voice say, 'Quit your kicking, Saul,' he quit and went to preaching right straight. That's me. I heard the voice of God yesterday. It said, 'Joe Smith, you've been knocking round, swearing, drinking, cussing Christians, for a good while; now stop—go to preaching.' So here I am. I don't know any Hebrew. I forgot my Greek before I ever learned it, and never since have remembered what I never knew. But that don't count.

"Christianity is real. Christ is real, for I saw Him yesterday. Your preacher is real. Tim Wendell is real. You don't believe it, but he is. He can give you pointers about being Christians. You can't cover up a real thing. Some one always finds it. I'm going to be real, and some one will find me so. I'm in this to stay. I'm going to wake you sleepy souls up. I'm going to tell the truth to you who have been shams and hypocrites so long.

"Now, I have just about finished. But I want the meetings Elder Harfis and I have begun to go right on. This town needs a revival. You haven't had

one for many years. The churches are all alike here. They're worse than a cold-storage plant. The parson set this church afire yesterday, now you set the rest of the churches afire.

"I'm going to be here just one more day, then I've got to go off on the road. I'm going to sell goods to-morrow. Don't any of you men ask me over to Bob's to drink, for I won't go. I give Bob notice now, I'm going to drive him out of business if I can. I don't want to hurt his hotel, but I do want to dam the stream that flows over his bar. That hotel was started as a Temperance House in this town many years ago by the preacher's father and some of his father's friends who put up the money. As a business venture it broke down. You hypocrites let it break down. You got men in there who couldn't keep a hotel without rum, so they said. But Bob can. He knows how to do just that, if he's a mind to. Besides that, Bob's got a good boy: a boy that Bob, and you men who drink there on the sly, are fitting for hell, and I want to see him saved, and to save him I'm going to bust Bob's bar sometime. There'll be a meeting here to-morrow night," he concluded abruptly, "and if the parson won't preach, I will."

As his sermon ended, this strange preacher burst out singing, "There is a fountain filled with blood," and again the congregation sang the hymn clear through. Then Joe said, "Now, elder."

Elder Harfis rose. "Friends," he began, "I have been an elder in this church for fifteen years. I never gave ten dollars a year to the support of the gospel, outside of my pew-rent, while pew-rents lasted. Joe Smith has been very rough on us to-night, but what he said is true. I have done everything I could to get

out of giving a cent to the church. I got you to do away with pew-rents for just that and nothing else. I have made one hundred and fifty thousand dollars clean money out of my business enterprises in the last fifteen years. Now I am going to begin to pay my debts." What followed then made me start with surprise.

"I will give twenty-five hundred dollars to the pastor," went on my elder. "He has been here more than three years. He has had one thousand dollars a year salary. He has been worth twice that. Just because he was one of our boys, and his mother's house was here, we thought we would save money on him. I led in that too, and it was mean. Now I will pay up. More than that, this church needs repairs, painting, and all sorts of things. I will give five thousand dollars for that; and whatever the meetings we are going to hold may cost, I will pay too."

As the elder took his seat, some one struck up, "When I survey the wondrous cross." When the hymn was ended, Joe said :

"There'll be no benediction here to-night. This is not the parson's affair at all. This is an independent congregational meeting. My brother Tim Wendell, who is over there in the back corner, will close this meeting with a prayer."

That was the finest moment of the whole fine evening. Mr. Wendell—I cannot say Tim when I think of it—rose and prayed :

"Father Divine, I have never been called a Christian. I have professed nothing, but I have reverenced Thee. As far as I have known what truth is, I have been true. So, I

pray, make this people true. Make them know that pure religion and undefiled before God, even the Father, is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself, each man, and to keep herself, each woman, unspotted from the world, *unspotted from the world, unspotted from the world.* This is the kind of religion I want to see in Greenton. Let us have this, O Lord God Almighty. *Amen.*"

That was the end. A very quiet, solemn congregation went out of that church edifice.

I was hardly inside my study door, when there was a knock and Elder Harfis entered. I started to rise.

"Don't rise, pastor," he said. "Here's my check for twenty-five hundred dollars. You will forgive my past, I know. I do not know whether God will forgive me or not." And the proud-spirited, cold old man threw himself down on his knees beside me, brokenly sobbing out his prayer. All I could say was, "You say you know I will forgive you, and you do not know whether God will or not? Am I, then, better than God?" The words satisfied him. After a little he arose, and with a grasp of my hand, "Good night, my pastor, my friend," he said. "Good night. God is in Greenton: is here to forgive and bless."

He passed out into the night. As I resumed my chair, I knew in my soul that what the elder had said was true. I knew that I myself was face to face with God. And I made account neither of time nor of place, until I became conscious that the sunlight was shining in at my window.

XII

WHICH RECORDS TWO JOURNEYS

THE trip from Greenton to New York by day, thirty years ago, was rather tedious. I was weary when the Hudson River train stopped finally in the great city. A leisurely stroll across to Fifth Avenue, and down that thoroughfare, looking in at the shop windows now and then, seemed a sensible way in which to rest. It was a Saturday in October, and I was bound for Plainton, New Jersey, to be guest of Major Ardman over Sunday and Monday. The meetings which Joe Smith and Elder Harfis had begun had progressed with no interruption for three whole months, producing very remarkable results. Jimmie MacNaughton had signed the pledge the very first week, under Joe's lead, and the tavern-keeper's boy had flatly refused to mix drinks any longer at his father's bar. More than a thousand people had been converted, most of them adults. Joe Smith had been in town four times, and each time I had let him occupy my pulpit. His preaching would have astonished my Andover professors, but it was eloquent and mighty for convicting men of sin. My church membership had gone up from about three hundred to over nine hundred. Those three months had been very wonderful. Letters had passed occasionally between Major Ardman and me, and David Henderson and me. As they had been present at the beginning of the work, they kept in touch with

WHICH RECORDS TWO JOURNEYS 135

its progress. Henderson had repeatedly invited me to visit him, and only recently the Major had urged me to preach for the church in Plainton. To make his plea more effective, he had proposed that I address the Presbyterian Union of his city on Monday night, narrating the events of the great revival. I had finally accepted his invitation, and Henderson's also, intending to pay both visits during my absence from home. So it came about that this October Saturday found me in the afternoon sauntering down Fifth Avenue, in an idle, care-free mood.

I had gone almost to Schaus' picture gallery, anticipating enjoyment in scanning the paintings and engravings there, when I saw a young man and woman step out of the passing throng to stop before the very window toward which my course was directed. There was but one girl in the world with that face and figure. I had last seen her wrapped in my woods blanket in a canoe on Indian Lake, almost six months before. The man was a good-looking, well-dressed young swell, I thought. He was well enough, but I was envious to think that he could walk with that girl in a way which fate had never yet granted me. I was wondering who he was, and wishing, in most unperson-like way, that I could kick him into the middle of the street, when the girl's eyes and mine met. Her face flushed, while I paused a second, intent to frame my greeting in just the right way, when I heard her say to the man, with deliberation, and so loudly that I knew she meant me to hear, "There ought to be a law to keep men from staring at women in the street."

Just before she spoke I had fancied she half started toward me; then her face had turned white and hard, as she spoke her fierce sentence. I did not de-

serve it. I had not stared. I had been delighted to see once more the girl I loved, and all the memory of that Adirondack drive had flashed through my mind. What a pleasure I was about to have. Then came the dispelling of the dream. It was plain the girl had taken strong dislike to me, and my wrath and mortification were intense. I plunged into the middle of the street to hail a stage passing down-town, and was at once at my wits' end in dodging the stream of carriages of every kind. Two or three times I was nearly run down, and I knew I was making a sorry spectacle of myself. The shouting drivers disconcerted me, my self-possession vanished; but I finally reached the stage and clambered to the top. The whole thing was over in two or three minutes, but it seemed like an age. When I was seated safely I looked back toward Schaus' shop front. The couple had moved down the walk, keeping abreast of the stage. The girl was watching the outcome intently. Her face was like marble, but the man seemed bored. As my eyes, blazing with anger, encountered hers with a strong impact, I saw a look of relief go across her face while the color came surging back. Then her eyes turned away and she dropped her head. Plainly she had been frightened, and I was gratified. I rode away down to Liberty Street. My anger grew hotter with every turn of the wheels. But there was grim happiness in the anger. I had frightened the goddess if I had done no more.

At Plainton I obeyed instructions given me by Major Ardman, and drove to his residence. He met me at the door with a hearty hospitality that left no doubt of his genuine pleasure in seeing me. After his salutation his first words were, "I wouldn't have

WHICH RECORDS TWO JOURNEYS 137

missed that Greenton Sunday for any consideration. It was great. The more I think of it, the more I wonder at it. Has Joe Smith held fast his profession?"

"Yes," I replied. The Major had taken away with one sentence all the resentment I had been feeling. "Yes, Joe will always hold out. In many respects he is the greatest Christian I have ever seen. He is absolutely fearless in his devotion to Christ, and his adaptability and ready wit make him vastly popular."

"We will talk about him later," said the Major. "I will take you to your room now. But I'll tell you first, David is here. He says you are going to Duqueboro for a visit."

"Yes, I am. I have put your invitation and his together, and I'll make one trip cover both."

"I'm glad," he rejoined. "You'll have the best time you ever had in your life. David's a great host. He's taken a strong liking for you. That's strange, too, for he's an undemonstrative man. But he says you gave him a definition of religion different from anything he's read in any book."

"I remember," I answered. "But I didn't think it struck him, for he turned it off with a laugh."

"Oh, you must not judge a Scotchman by his laugh. Or you mustn't judge this Scotchman so," the Major replied. "You know, they say the Mississippi is so crooked that a boat going down passes itself coming back, and returns its own salute. Well, David is as crooked in his ways as that. Not bad, mind you. Not wickedly crooked. But just tortuous—winding—don't you know? But I must not keep you. Come on."

The Major stood in the parlor with Mrs. Ardman and a young man whose back was turned, as he was

busy with some books on a table. The Major presented me to his good wife and then called, "Here, Felix, shake hands with our guest," and to my amazement I found myself taking the hand of the young man who had been with the maid of honor before Schaus' shop window.

My heart gave one big thump, and then I had myself absolutely in hand.

"I think I saw you on Fifth Avenue this afternoon," I said.

"Quite possible," he answered. "I was on Fifth Avenue."

"Yes, you were with a lady whom I have met on two occasions," and I spoke the name of the maid of honor.

"Yes. I was with her," he answered. "Where was it? Why didn't you speak to her?"

"'Twas before Schaus' shop window. I was about to speak when a remark she made to you checked me." I spoke as calmly as if I had not a great struggle over that.

"Why, were you the man that—" He never finished that question. The Major stepped in, saying, "Dinner, parson. Give Mrs. Ardman your arm; Felix and I will follow."

I was grateful enough to the Major. He had piloted me, without knowing, past Scylla and Charybdis; and I took great pains that the young man should have no opportunity to return to the subject. In that I was also favored by circumstances. We had not been at dinner long before Henderson was announced, and a place was made for him at the table. He was evidently accustomed to that sort of thing, and made himself perfectly at home. I asked him how he happened to be in Plainton.

WHICH RECORDS TWO JOURNEYS 139

"Oh," he answered, "my presence is needfu' to ye. Ye mind, ye made the great hit o' your life because I was before ye in Greenton that day, and I've come to gie ye inspiration and courage for the morrow."

I knew perfectly well it was curiosity to see and hear me that had brought him, but I answered, "Well, if it was your presence in Greenton that made that Sunday and its consequences, you may congratulate yourself on having done more good than falls to the lot of most men to do." Then he started in, in true Henderson style:

"Ye haven't resigned from yon Greenton church yet, I doot?"

"No, I haven't," I laughed back at him.

"But ye will, man, ye will," he rejoined. "'Twill be growin' hot there, I doot. Ye played wi' congregational combustibles, an' there'll be fire some day."

"There has been fire all summer," was my answer, "Pentecostal fire."

"That's no the fire I'm talkin' aboot," Henderson answered. "I'm talkin' aboot the fire o' the Lord that consumes the chaff an' stubble."

"Well, which do you call me, chaff or stubble?"

"Ye're light enow in your language the day for chaff," he retorted, "an' ye're set enow in your way for stubble. An' on that 'no benediction' day ye was both. Oh, ye'll get burned some day, I doot. For the apostle says the Lord shall try every man's work by fire, whether it be wood, hay, or stubble, gold, silver, or precious stones——"

"Well," I interrupted, "I haven't been burned yet, and as for fire breaking out in my congregational combustibles, as you call them! See here, man, we had 'the old-time fire,' and we had also a rain of heavenly

grace, which did not extinguish but fed the fire; so your other threatened conflagration was impossible. We had a great revival," I continued with enthusiasm; "Joe Smith started it—Joe and Elder Harfis."

"Man, man," Henderson interrupted, "revivals can no start wi' blasphemers. Joe Smith is a blasphemer." Henderson spoke with some heat. He did not fancy Joe.

"No," I answered, "not so. That isn't fair. He was a blasphemer, but he is now a wonderful disciple of Jesus Christ. He preached four sermons during the three months of meetings whose like I shall never be able to preach."

Mrs. Ardman came to my rescue. "Mr. Henderson," she said, "I cannot have you spoil our guest's dinner with your arguing. You know you don't mean what you say. After dinner, we will have the whole story in the library."

Henderson transferred his attention to her.

"Not mean what I say? Do I look like a man that wouldna mean what I say?"

"Yes, you do," she replied. "I know you, David Henderson, and you shall not bother my guest another minute."

"There's no Bible against ye, madam," was the response, humorously rueful. "The apostle only said, 'Let the women keep silence in the churches.' He's been sorry he didna say more, I doot."

After that I was allowed to eat my dinner in peace. But Henderson had not abandoned his purpose. They planted me in a great easy-chair in the library when dinner was finished, but it was not to be a haven of rest. Cigars lighted, the irrepressible Scotchman began again:

WHICH RECORDS TWO JOURNEYS 141

"Now, man, aboot the blasphemer and the revival. I say they're no compatible. Ye can explain yerself, I doot."

"To explain myself," I answered, "will make me give the whole story. And I am to tell it on Monday night publicly. You will all be present. To tell it now will spoil it for you three."

"Are ye afraid to gie it twice, for fear ye canna do it twice the same?" he retorted.

Major Ardman said in a very friendly way, "Be still, David. You know better." Then, turning to me, he continued, "Hawthorne made a reputation out of 'Twice Told Tales.' You could not follow a nobler example. Please tell the story. We shall enjoy both nights equally."

And so I told the story. I had formed a rather prejudicial opinion of Felix Ardman, but I must say no one ever listened to a story better than he. Once or twice he interrupted me courteously with interested questions. I saw he had both heart and brain. When the story was done, Henderson made a single remark. "God is a great God when He can save sic a blasphemer. But I remember He saved Saul o' Tarsus, and that was harder, for 'he breathed out threatenings and slaughter.' A man must be gey bad to breathe out slaughter." With that he rose and said good-night.

His last words to me I have never forgotten:

"My lad, ye're queer, but queer men count. I'm queer masel'. That's what makes me more successful than ither men. After our talk on the train, yon time, I had ma doots if ye had a ca'. But I gie it up, noo. Ye have a ca', I doot. But ye tempted Providence in that revival."

How little we know. How blessed human igno-

rance of God's ways is. Forty-eight hours from the moment David Henderson was speaking his bantering words at Major Ardman's door, he was sitting with me in a northbound train on the Hudson River road, whiling away the hours as I retraced my way homeward.

Major Ardman took me on Monday morning to see Edison's new shops at Menlo Park. We went directly in from there to the Major's New York office. As we walked through the crowded ferryboat, a gentleman whom I had met on Sunday at Major Ardman's approached and said :

"So you have at last received your telegram. You have my sympathy. It is very sad."

"Telegram?" I exclaimed. "What telegram? What is sad?"

The gentleman saw he had blundered, and he did not have quick tact to extricate himself. His confusion alarmed me, and I repeated my words. "What telegram?"

Then he answered, "I am sorry to have to be the bearer of the news I have. But you must know it. A message came this morning from your home about your mother."

"What of my mother?" I cried. "Has anything happened to my mother?"

"Yes," he answered; and his words were very gentle, and his manner very kind. "Your mother has gone home."

Then the floor of the boat whirled under my feet, and I fell into the arms of Major Ardman.

As we entered Major Ardman's New York office Mr. Henderson met us at the door.

WHICH RECORDS TWO JOURNEYS 143

"Lad," he said gently, "I know a' aboot it. I heard o' it over at the Major's this mornin', after ye had gone. I went to your room, an' picked up, an' packed up, a' your belongin's. They're here, in your valise. There's a train goes up the Hudson River road at five o'clock, an' one leaves Troy at nine-thirty. I've telegraphed to Cambelt for the best rig they hae, to be ready at the station. Ye'll be hame by twelve-thirty to-night, an' ye won't hae to look after anythin', for I'm goin' wi' ye."

What Henderson did during the next four days endeared him to me past all forfeiture. He accompanied me back to my empty home. He attended to every detail of the last sad ceremonial. He found where Joe Smith was, telegraphed for him, and paid his expenses to Greenton, in order that he might speak at the funeral. He called together the session of the church and told the members they must give me a six months' vacation abroad. Not until all this was done, did he say good-bye.

His farewell words were unlike any others he ever said to me.

"Guid-bye," he said. "Brace up, man. Your lot is the common lot of a', only it came in a very hard way. But, man, God spared ye the mither a long time." His voice was growing husky. "Mine went when I was but a bairn. Had she lived so long as yours I might perhaps hae been a better man. Guid-bye. Go over the sea. When ye come hame, I'll hae somethin' for ye, I hope, but ye can't tell always. Guid-bye. Ye'll be strong, I dinna doot."

XIII

ON SHIPBOARD

THE night before Henderson left for home, a committee of the church and people of Green-ton brought me a purse of two thousand dollars in gold to defray the expenses of the foreign tour. The gift was a great surprise. It was presented in a simple, beautiful way, but I demurred, saying I had not yet used the gift made by Elder Harfis. The committee would not listen to my demurral, and Henderson came to its help with a proposition that I accepted almost before I knew what I had done.

"Ye haena used the twenty-five hundred the elder gave ye? When wad the elder be givin' ye that?"

In a moment the story was told. He was evidently greatly pleased, but he said, "Ye're juist like a' the meenisters. Juist like a' o' them."

"How?" I asked.

"Man, ye dinna ken what to do wi' guid money. Think o' yersel'; twenty-five hundred in yer hauns almost four months, losin' interest, an' ye no' carin'."

"Well, what better could I have done? It is in the bank safely. I might have invested it and lost it."

"I'll invest it for ye whaur ye won't lose it. Gie it to me, man. I'll pay ye sax per cent. for it, and I'll not lose it. I'll account for it when ye least expect, an' I'll tell ye what to do wi' it then."

I drew him a check then and there, and in return he wrote a demand note, which I had for many years.

When the twenty-five hundred was in Henderson's hand there was nothing to do but to take the money which the committee had brought.

Henderson and I were late reaching *The Westernland*. We had lunched at the St. Denis, and he would have a cab to go over to Jersey City. I was very nearly left. The last visitors were coming off, and Henderson could not go on board with me. As I went up the gang-plank, Bruce Fraser came down. He paused for a moment, said, "You? Are you a passenger?"

"Yes, why not?" I said.

"All aboard," rang sharp and clear. Each of us started.

"Why not?" Bruce repeated. "There's no 'why not' that I know of. This is a free country." His face was flushed. His breath was beery. As he went down the plank, I heard him say, "Damn that minister." Then I knew by intuition that the maid of honor was to be a fellow-passenger, and the thought dashed the high anticipation with which I had come to the steamer. When the first call for dinner came, the maid of honor and her brother went down the companionway stairs just in advance of me; but they did not go to the captain's table, at which Henderson had secured me a seat.

Two whole days passed before we met. She knew who her fellow-passengers were, for every one had scanned with curious scrutiny the sailing-list. I had, when first on board. Just as I supposed, there were the names, and Newark, New Jersey, but there was no wife of the brother along, and that made me wonder a little. She was avoiding me clearly enough, and I had not the courage to face such a look as she

had given me before Schaus' window. Her brother and I had recalled that Adirondack drive, and he had thanked me once more profusely for my courtesy. I told him bluntly enough it was not mine, but Wendell's. The third afternoon, just before dinner, while the sea was rolling heavily, and I was feeling a trifle uncomfortable, as I lay in my steamer chair, she passed, walking briskly, with a lady and two young men. In her promenading heretofore, she had been careful to pass far toward the bow, but had evidently forgotten my locality in the exhilaration of the walk. I saw her coming before she saw me, so that foresight had given opportunity for fore-guarding. As she passed, my face was buried in a book, but I was watching her for all that. She did not see me until just as the party was opposite; then her face flushed, her eyes flashed, her step quickened. I knew the look. I had seen it first at St. David's. "Why, what's the matter with you?" said a girl's voice. "When you saw that man you jumped as if you were shot."

"What man?" she replied. "Where? I think I slipped on some spray on the deck. I am not so afraid of men that I jump when I see them."

"All the same, you jumped," laughed the other girl. "Come now: who was he?"

"How should I know, if I did not see him?" said the maid of honor. But I noticed the party did not tramp past me again.

On the fifth day out, when half way over, I sat in my steamer chair watching a school of porpoises play. Probably they knew their game. I did not. But they were so alert, their colors flashed so beautifully in the sunlight, that I cried out as a pleased boy might have done:

"Oh, you beauties—I wish I could speak your language. I would know what you are so merry over."

The man in the steamer chair next mine, whom I had not particularly noticed, heard me, and turning toward me, said :

"You're a poet, I see."

"No, sir," I answered. "No poet; only a country preacher."

"Poet, for all that," he answered in a friendly voice. "Who but a poet would think about speaking the language of porpoises, and finding the causes of their merriment?"

"Why, anybody," I said.

"Oh, nonsense," was his quick reply; "there's not another person on this boat who has ever thought of such a thing." Then, as a man was passing, a finely dressed man, with every evidence of well-to-do comfort about him, my deck-mate accosted him suddenly, "Pardon me, dear sir, but did it ever occur to you that those porpoises there have a language which they speak to each other, and that they are playing a very merry game?"

"What, those fish there?" was the brusque reply. "No; fish can't talk. Fish don't know anything about being merry. Are you crazy?"

"Oh, no," said the questioner. "This gentleman and I were talking about poetry, that was all."

"Do you see?" said my new acquaintance, "there are one hundred and eighty passengers on this boat, and I can get an answer like that from three out of every four of them. There's not one who in a whole life, on personal initiative, will say such a thing as I overheard you say."

The Westernland had sailed on Saturday. On the

second Sunday the captain asked me to speak after he had read the Anglican service. When the brief discourse was ended, the captain said, "One of our ladies has consented to sing my favorite hymn for us. That will end this Sabbath service."

One of the young men of the promenading party went to the piano; and the maid of honor rose and sang the hymn which has never since ceased to echo in my soul: "Art thou weary, art thou languid?" Seldom has a song so moved me. Her voice was exquisite, rich, deep, strong, clear, melodious. I had never known she could sing. I said to myself, how can a girl, who can sing like that, look as she looked at me that day on Fifth Avenue? As the company passed out of the cabin, I went to where she stood among some congratulating friends, and spoke to her. "Pardon me," I said, "but the finish you gave to the service of the morning was so beautiful, I cannot refrain, as one who had a small part in it, from expressing my gratitude." She looked at me as a marble statue would look if it had a soul, and said, "Thank you; the least I can say is, the service inspired the song." Before I could say more, had I wished, she had turned away and gone to the deck with the accompanist of her song.

My chance acquaintance of the porpoises was awaiting me on deck, and with him the brother of the maid of honor. We three paced the deck up and down for a time, I in silence, they chatting. Suddenly my porpoise man said to me, "If you're like most preachers, you'll be interested to hear about a revival that I read about just before leaving Boston. We Boston people don't believe in them much, but this was unusual."

"What was it?" I asked.

Then to my great surprise he told the Greenton story. If he had read the sailing-list, and had seen the name Greenton, why he did not connect me and the place and the event, I do not know. The maid of honor's brother spoke up and said, "You don't believe all that yarn you've reeled off, do you?"

"Believe it? Yes, I do. I know it. One of my salesmen was there when it began, and several times afterward."

And then I was surprised. "One of your salesmen?" I repeated. "May I ask his name?"

"Smith; Joe Smith. Easy to remember in this Mormon-enduring country."

"Is this Joe Smith any more reliable than his great Mormon namesake?" I asked.

"Yes, sir. Absolutely reliable is Joe. Why, he is one of the converts, and he shows his conversion in every act of his life. He used to be wretchedly profane, and knew a whole lot more about whiskey than I wished he did. But he came back to Boston early in July sober and quiet, and not an oath passed his lips all the while that he was in off the road. And the best of it is he keeps it right up. He was always a good salesman, but he is the best of our whole force now."

"Well, that rather proves that Boston has something to learn about revivals, does it not?" I said, in as matter-of-fact manner as I could.

"Yes, Boston can learn a great deal about revivals. Joe Smith can tell the old city more about real salvation than it has known since Hosea Ballou began to preach his doctrine of sham salvation. Joe Smith has astonished me. I knew he was smart! but I had no

idea at all of how smart he really is." He grew very earnest as he went on: "Smart. Yes, sir. He preaches. Think of that: a road salesman preaching. I left Boston last Thursday. That morning Joe came in with a telegram from the revival church, saying the minister was to be abroad for six months, and the people wanted him to preach for them for the whole time of the preacher's absence. He came to know if we would let him off. He fairly took my breath. Of course I told him he could go, but I haven't any idea he can fill the bill."

"Well, you've fairly taken my breath," I cried. "But you're mistaken when you say Joe can't fill the bill. He can. He's more of a preacher than I am a poet. He was in my college class for a year, and, besides, that church of which you have been telling is my church."

My companion looked at me a moment, and said, repeating my name and Greenton two or three times, "What a dolt I am. I couldn't even put two and two together. Of course, I ought to have known you were the man. I read the sailing-list, but I didn't take you in at all. But you have taken me in. Here you have trotted us two men up and down this deck, hearing all about your own self and never saying a word. Well, I knock under. Pretending surprise when you knew it all!"

"But," said the maid's brother, "you hardly gave him a chance. You talked pretty fast, I think."

"Yes, you did," I said. "You certainly did talk fast. And you told me things I did not know. I made no pretense when I appeared surprised. I was surprised when you told about my church sending for Joe. No one at home gave me a hint of what they

meant to do. I'm afraid it means my day is done, for Joe can preach as I never could. But you have lost him," I added. "He will never go back to selling goods on the road. A man who can preach, and once gets a taste of it, will never stop. Preaching is the most exhilarating, fascinating work in the world, and when once a man knows the joy of preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ, nothing will stop him."

"I don't know about that," was the answer. "I think you're wrong. Joe likes the road; likes money; likes our firm; and besides, he's a natural-born Bohemian."

"I'm not wrong," I replied with some earnestness. "Joe'll never go back to you, Mr. Harris."

"Now, how did you know my name is Harris?" he asked in surprise. "Are you a detective too?"

"Oh, no. Only a poet and a mathematician. Joe has told me his firm's name—Murdoch, Stiles, and Harris—and that Mr. Harris was the one of the firm from whom he received his orders. I only had to imagine a bit, and add two and two together. By the way," I added in an afterthought, "my mother's name was Harris."

"Well, what next? What'll you tell me now? Where was she from?"

"From Houlton, Massachusetts."

"See here, friend," with growing animation, "we're probably kindred. My father was from that same town. Was old Hinckley Harris a forebear of yours?"

"Yes: he was my great-grandfather, and a most singular character he was."

Mr. Harris stopped stock still. "What a little world this is," he exclaimed. "Here we happen to be

sitting side by side on deck: you go to spouting poetry at the porpoises; I chip in with a word; the play goes on, and a regular Box and Cox ending develops. I'm not your long lost brother, but we're second cousins. Isn't that so?"

Then the brother stepped between us and said:— "Yes, gentlemen, that's so; and if you'll permit me, I'll introduce you two second cousins to each other. There's nothing like an ocean steamer for making discoveries and falling in love."

Just then the maid of honor passed, with the young man who had played her accompaniment. And Mr. Harris said, "Yes, especially the falling in love. That young couple seem to be trying it. And I don't blame the man. She's the handsomest girl I ever saw."

"Thank you, sir; she is my sister," was the response, and then the bell rang for dinner. But there was great unrest in my heart during that dinner hour. I loved the girl that day as I never had before, and she would not give me a look or word. There had not been even friendly recognition. What did she mean? There was young Felix Ardman. She had been sweetly gracious to him that afternoon, I could see. Felix was well enough. Did she love him? There was Bruce Fraser. Of course he had been with her on the steamer the day we sailed, to say good-bye. He wasn't well enough. He was taller and finer-looking than Felix, but he was a young man whom no girl should marry until he gave up drinking habits. Then there was this man on board. I wanted to throw him into the ocean.

We were on our ninth day out. "To-morrow about noon," the captain said at dinner, "we'll be at our

Antwerp dock." I was glad. I wanted to get away from the girl. Once off the ocean our ways would diverge.

The afternoon dragged monotonously away. The ship was skirting the southern coast of England, just off the chalk cliffs. The day had been lowery and dark and the sun had hardly looked at us so much as to see if we were worth lighting a course for. But away to the west was a long strip of space, beautifully clear, between the edge of the low-hanging clouds and the horizon. I was alone on the coast side of the ship, leaning over the rail, beating the old question of the maid of honor and the man she tolerated, and the man she would not tolerate, back and forth in my brain. My eyes were now on the water, now on the dun gray cliffs, and now on the narrow strip of clear sky. All the while the sun was racing down the west in behind the clouds, hastening to his nightly resting place below the outermost rim of the world. Then at last he sailed into that strip of clear sky and lighted up the whole world with a wonderful radiance. He flashed back the great salute of his glory, ere by departure he should make one more day die, and touching those dun gray cliffs, turned them to one gleaming mass of silver. A voice behind me said, "And it shall come to pass that at evening time there shall be light." It was the captain. "That is the dear old land," he said. "See how she slopes all emerald green down from the glistening cottages. That is Merrie England. Do you wonder that the Saxon, and the Dane, and the Norman coveted that lovely land? And that is the Queen's, God bless her." He doffed his hat and passed on. Then I said gently to myself, "And it shall come to pass that at evening time there shall be light. That

shall be my prophecy for the girl I love. Only I hope the evening time is not too far away."

It was not without regret that the thought came that night, "You and Mr. Harris will part to-morrow." He had been a delightful companion. Between the two sets of thoughts caused thus by the girl and the man, my mood was sombre. It was nine o'clock. *The Westernland* had passed Dover, and her signals had been flashed out to the waiting world. I went forward alone that I might be near enough to the night watchman to hear his mellow cry of "All's well," as it had been heard so often. I noticed no one near; my eyes were on the stars; I paused for a moment to think of what was behind, and what might be before, and then, turning toward the rail, I almost fell over a steamer chair and its occupant, whom I saw in the dimness to be a lady. "Pardon me, madam," were the first words that came. "I was looking at the stars hanging low over old England."

"So I perceived," was the answer, and the voice had no sympathy of tone. But only one woman in the world had that voice. This was the maid of honor. There was an empty chair by her, and a rug in it. I turned to go, when an impulse bade me stop. "This is our last night on the boat," I said. "Will you permit the pleasure of one final word?"

"Are words so full of pleasure that you like to speak them? I find them borous."

"Occasionally I find them cruel," I answered. Then after a rather awkward pause, "I suppose my words are borous. They are to me sometimes. I have to speak so many."

"I did not say any such thing," she answered. "That was your interpretation."

"No, you did not say so," I rejoined. "But I felt the tone. And once your words were cruel. Why were they so? Why are you so distant here? Is it possible that the best man of St. David's is the worst man of *The Westernland*?"

"I was not so very distant just now, when you almost fell over me," she said.

"No, that is true. I hope you will pardon me. But is it possible you have forgotten the Adirondack drive; is it possible you have forgotten St. David's?"

"If I am distant, as you say, perhaps it is because I have not forgotten St. David's. And why should I remember the Adirondack drive? That was only another of the instances in which you have thrown yourself in my way."

I was beginning to be angry, but my great love for her kept my unruly spirit checked a little. I was about to answer, denying her charge, when she said, "Why have you followed me here to-night? Why do you persist in efforts at acquaintanceship which chance meetings have not warranted? Why are you on this boat?"

That was too much and I blazed out: "Pardon me, I did not follow you here to-night. I sauntered along the deck to hear the watchman's cry. What efforts have I made? The Adirondack meeting was not of my making. The Fifth Avenue meeting was not of my designing. On my way to be Major Ardman's guest at Plainton, I was whiling away an hour on Fifth Avenue. And when I saw you, as I did, it was not the look of an offensive street starer that I gave, but one of delight at meeting unexpectedly a lady who had had a part with me in what I shall always regard as one of the pleasantest experiences of my

life. It may be that I am 'worst man' now, and not 'best man' as I was. But you will always be, at least in memory, Phyllis Lorraine's radiant maid of honor."

She stopped me, and began to speak ; but I said, "Pardon me, I must finish now ; then you will not need to speak. Why am I on this boat ? It was as unpremeditated a month ago as was that Adirondack meeting. I went to Plainton to preach and lecture, scarcely a month ago. I preached, but the lecture was not delivered. A telegram on Monday told me my mother had died that morning. I was alone in the world. I had been through a strenuous summer, and the new shock broke me down. My congregation has sent me away for a six months' rest. Had I known you were a passenger on this boat, I would have delayed my sailing. The memory of the Saturday afternoon before Schaus' window, and the tragic event of Monday are coupled in my mind too closely to make me wish to be visibly reminded of one, while I am trying to forget the other. I have tried to speak with you but once. This morning I only paid the tribute which a gentleman should pay to a lady who had most beautifully concluded a service in which he had borne a small part. This meeting to-night was the purest accident ; and if we ever meet again, be assured it will be by accident. So I bid you good-night." In a tumult of love and rage I left her there in the bow of *The Westernland*, nor did I think ever to see her face again.

Harris and I stood together, as the boat drew near to her Antwerp docks. "Well, my friend, my kinsman," I said, "it will be good-bye presently, and to me it will be regret too."

"Why? Why good-bye? Is your itinerary fixed like Medo-Persic laws?"

"No. I hardly know where I am going. To Rotterdam and The Hague first, perhaps."

"What's to prevent my going to Rotterdam and The Hague also?" he asked.

"Nothing but your own plans," was my answer.

"Well, I have no plans. Let's join forces. I know Europe. You don't. Do you speak French or German?"

"Yes, both," I replied.

"Well, I speak neither; but I know the country's ways. Let's go together for four months. You're going to the Holy Land, you said. I'll stay by you until you start on that tour. Then I will go home. What do you say?"

"All right, I say. That suits me."

As we were on the gang-plank he saw the maid of honor getting into a cab. "By Jove," he said, "there's that handsome singer. I saw you speak to her after service. Do you know her?"

"Yes," I said. And her cab door shut.

XIV

ON FOREIGN SHORES

WE were in Interlaken at the "Beau Rivage." "Five or six years ago," said Harris, "I was sitting just as we are to-night in this stuffy little office room. I had no company. The house was full of Russians. It was raining hard as it does now. Between rain and Russians I had no choice. There was a large, fair-looking man sitting across the room, who I could see was eying me critically. He was not a Russian, I was sure, for he did not join in their jargon. I could see, also, he was preparing to accost me on the supposition that I was not a Russian. I gave him no sign of encouragement, but he rose finally, and crossing took a seat by me.

"Ye're not a Russian, I doot," he said.

"No, I'm not a Russian. About that I don't doubt," I answered.

"Ye're an American tourist seein' Europe, one o' the do-it-in-six-weeks kind, I doot."

"You are all wrong, sir. I've been in Switzerland more than six weeks, and it will be six months before I see Boston."

"Boston? Ye're a Yankee then. Ye say "guess," and "reckon?"

"Well, I guess I do; and I reckon you're Scotch. Am I right?"

"No, you're wrang. I was Scotch. But I'm American. I dinna believe in the doubles. I was a'

Scotch when a laddie at Dunfermline; but I'm a' American now.'

"Well, I'm glad to see a fellow-countryman," I said.

"Ye may be," was the answer; "for I'm no ordinar' man. I'm a reelegious man. An' you're better than naebody."

"The conversation was becoming amusing by that time, and to cap his blunt queerness, he said, "An' do ye mean to tell me ye're frae Boston, an' no blush i' the tellin'?"

"Yes," I answered. "Why should I blush? I was born in Boston, and have always lived there."

"An', man, ye're no ashamed? Why, Boston's doomed. Boston's filled wi' lost souls. Boston's the home o' the Unitarians. A man micht as well be a blasphemer as a Unitarian."

"Then I laughed long and heartily, and when I recovered myself, said, "But I'm no Unitarian. I am an Episcopalian."

"At that he tossed his head and ejaculated, "That's better, I doot. But there's no much reelegion in Henry the Eighth papists. Ye're atween the deevil and the deep sea, I doot. But ye ca' yersel' reelegious. Are ye reelegious now?!"

At that point, I stopped Mr. Harris in his story. "Kinsman," I said, "that's the identical question with which that same man began a conversation with me just about a year ago. His name is David Henderson, and I think he must be one of the most singular characters in the United States. He probably told you that religion is believing what the catechism says believe, whether you do or not, and he's been a mighty good friend to me."

"His name was Henderson, sure enough, and that is exactly what he said about religion. Who is he?"

But before I could answer, he spoke again. "What are all those Russians going out for?" He went to the window. "It has stopped raining. Let's go out for a breath. Those are wise Russians." We went out and Henderson was forgotten.

We strolled westward, along the broad road that leads to the great inns where wealth and fashion go. There is an open park, halfway up to the Victoria, with wooden settees scattered along the margin near the road. Harris had told me of this place and of the view which the spectator, when the day is clear, can obtain of the great glory of Interlaken and the Bernese Oberland, the Jungfrau; but that view had so far been denied us, at first by the fogs that filled the valley, and later by the pouring rain. As we sat in the little park, Harris talked about the great mountain.

"Do you know," he said, "the shape and bulk of that mighty mountain are of themselves sublime. I'll never forget the gleaming of the ice-cap upon its crown, as I first saw it. But," he continued enthusiastically, "when the light of sun and clouds is thrown in glory on the long down-stretching slopes, and on the fingers of snow that reach even to the deep valley below, as if they would gather for themselves some of its verdant loveliness, the vision is entrancing."

Even as he spoke, there came a movement in the sky.

"Look, look," I cried. "The scene shifters of the skies have begun their work."

Then our voices were hushed. Silently, unseen hands rolled the mists away from Jungfrau's summit, and then drew back to left and right the curtains of the clouds, leaving the wondrous brilliancy of the full

moon of a European autumn in the midst of the rift. The light fell, touching the eternal ice, transfiguring it before our gaze. Rubies, emeralds, and diamonds, such as only the magic forces of moisture, air, and light can make, flashed and glowed in wonderful iridescence. The scene was beyond all power of word or pen. Speechless there for a quarter of an hour we sat and watched the pageant of the heavenly light. Then the curtain fell. The clouds swept back over the mountain's crest and left the world once more to darkness. As the glory passed, Mr. Harris repeated softly, "And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, . . . having the glory of God, and his light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone clear as crystal." He was silent for a moment, then resumed, "Phillips Brooks is my rector. He and I sat on this very seat one night two years ago, and saw the mountain under the moon, but we did not have clouds and darkness for curtains, nor the winds for the shifters of the scenes."

By and by, the rain began to fall again heavily, and we retraced our steps to the Beau Rivage and the Russians.

We were in Rome on New Year's day. I found there letters from Henderson and Joe Smith, and, most unexpectedly, one from Harry Sinclair. Its postmark was Duqueboro, which aroused my interest immediately, and its contents ran as follows :

"DEAR OLD CHUM :

"I don't know where this will find you, nor will you have the faintest idea how I happen to be writing from Duqueboro. I am well, and so is Phyllis,

and she says I may send her love though you don't deserve to have any good woman's love, since you so shamefully neglect whole heaps of the article that you might have for the asking.

"The day after you sailed, Mr. Henderson came out to see us. I wish you could have come and seen how snug we were in our little home before we left it. He told me you had sailed for a six months' trip abroad, and the reasons that led to it. That was sad about your mother, chum; it was indeed. I didn't know a thing about it. There was no way I could, you know. But, old boy, everything a man could think, of love and sympathy for his friend, I have thought for you. I have never forgotten the vacation I spent at your home. Your mother was so lovely to me, I envied you. You know my mother died when I was only thirteen. That you were away from her was sadder than all. Mr. Henderson said he helped you about getting started for home. Why didn't that young Felix Ardman go home with you, instead of leaving you to go alone, as I suppose you did?"

And I stopped reading just there, to wonder at David Henderson. Not one word of all he had done for me had he told Sinclair. But Harry need not have wondered about Felix. It was not that he was more thoughtless than other young fellows. He was a good-hearted man. Had some one suggested to him that he could do certain things for me, he surely would have done them. But he was not cast in such mould as to act on unselfish lines on his own initiative. I resumed the reading.

"You will wonder how I know where to address you. My guest told me. He said he was in New York on business, and happened to be at the St. Denis

just as you were leaving for your steamer, and so went with you to *The Westernland* and saw you off. He is very fond of you. He gave me your Paris correspondents' names. He stayed with us two days. Then nothing would do but Phyllis and I must go home with him for a visit, and we went.

"I'll say one thing for David Henderson: he never does things by halves. Nothing on the train was good enough for us but the parlor car. The entertainment at his house was the best I ever enjoyed. We were there for a week, and when we returned he sent us back in the same comfortable way in which we came, and bore every expense of the whole outing. What a royal time that was! Duqueboro was my old home. I had not looked upon its lovely old smokingness for five years, and I was glad of the treat. The old place was dirty, but it was dear. Everybody likes Duqueboro. You can't keep a collar clean for a half day and the men's faces are as grimy as if they were the faces of miners out of the coal pits, but the people are splendid. Some days the fog is so thick you can't tell which side of the street you are on, and you can't see how to get across to the other side to find out whether you were on that side already or not. The rector of the Church of the Redeemer was away, and arrangements had been made for me to preach in the church of my boyhood. I enjoyed that day. Friends of my father, who remembered me as a child, crowded around after the service and said pleasant things. But despite it all, I was lonesome. The playfellows of my boyhood were scattered, and those that were there helped to make me lonesome. The people were splendid, just as everyone was saying. They told me I had a perfectly lovely wife. Well,

I knew that before, but to hear others say so was a gratification. Some told Phyllis I was a mighty fine preacher, and she remarked that she had known that for a long time. Henderson drove us to church and stayed to service. When we were all back at home enjoying a good dinner, he broke out all at once: 'Lad, how do ye manage wi' a' that jumpin' up and sittin' doon, and the choir breakin' in on ye in a' sorts of places where they shouldna? I don't wonder it muddles your brain. I've heard poorer sermons than that the day, I doot, but I dinna ken where, and I've no use for your papistry anyway.' Isn't he queer?

"He is evidently a very important man in Duqueboro. He seems to be universally trusted, and people say he is rich. He did me a good turn about that old Texas land. Did I tell you about that? You know, I have a little money left me by my father. I invested twenty-five hundred dollars with a mortgage company in Texas. The mortgageor was no good. I put the matter into Henderson's hands because he had been my father's lawyer. He foreclosed and took title for me, and, just about the time you sailed, he sold it subject to my approval; and while I was in Duqueboro, he paid me the money. When I had his check in my hand I felt good, for I had thought it lost.

"Well, now, prepare for wonders. When I had been back at home four weeks, there came a letter from the people of the Church of the Redeemer in Duqueboro saying their rector was to leave them in two weeks: that they wanted no break in their services: that they had heard me recently with great pleasure, and now asked me formally to accept the charge of the Church of the Redeemer. So here we

are in Duqueboro, only six weeks from the time we went to visit David Henderson. Say, chum—I wish you were married. I can't see how a man can be successful as a pastor without a wife. But you never cared for girls much. Phyllis and I were sure you would be enamored of her maid of honor. You were just suited for each other. You are both tall, both fine-looking: she is almost as beautiful as Phyllis: you are dark, and she is as fair as the day: there could not have been a better match, or so we thought, but each of you acted as if you never desired to see the other again. See here, old boy, why not start on that quest now? And say! She's on the same side of the ocean with you now. She sailed about the same time you did. I don't know what boat she went on. Her brother is with her. His wife died suddenly from a cold she caught in the Adirondacks about a year ago, and he is seeking by change to forget his grief.

“Bruce Fraser, one of our ushers, is managing his business in Newark while he is away. In the maid's last letter she talked more about Fraser than I liked. But Phyllis says if she loved him she would not talk about him at all.

“Say, old chum, why don't you wake up and go after that girl? You acted like a dolt through two whole days at the Wayne Mansion. Brace up: go after her. Write to me here at Duqueboro. Tell me when you're coming home, and I'll get Phyllis to have a house party. We'll invite you and the maid of honor, with anybody else that Phyllis knows that will be nice, for foils, while you and the maid can do the real sword act, you know.

“There's only one more bit of news. That Major Ardman, whom you saw in Greenton, has moved back

to Duqueboro. He lived here once. He and Henderson are great friends. Henderson got a place for Felix in the railroad offices, and the whole family has returned. I hear Felix finds Henderson's daughter Julia exceedingly agreeable. Well, good-bye. With all sorts of good wishes.

“HARRY.”

That letter threw me into a brown study. I sat with it in my hand in the dingy little room, while the figures of Harry and Phyllis and Henderson and the fascinating girl were dancing through my brain. I did not hear Harris enter nor know that he had entered, until he called out in a cheery voice, “Hallo, old man! what's the matter? What do you think? I saw that girl down the way leading to the Forum.”

“What girl?” I asked, knowing only too well what his answer would be.

“Why, that beautiful girl that sang ‘Art thou weary?’ Don't you remember her? I declare she is peerless. I wish you had been along; there's not a sight like her in this old city. All you'll see here is ruins. But she is no relic of a past day. She is——”

“Oh, stop, unless you want to make me mad. I wish the girl was on the other side of the ocean. She haunts me. I think I have beaten her out of my heart, and lo! she is right before me in living form again.”

“Why, how's that?” was his question. “Do you know her? Did you ever see her before you boarded *The Westernland*? ”

“Yes, I know her, and I know her to my cost.”

“Been crossed in love?” said he.

“No,” I replied. “Not crossed, nor paralleled, but encircled, enmeshed; and I want to get out, and can't.”

"I wouldn't try," he said. "I'd take what comes."

"But there'll nothing come. I've renounced her, and I won't stir a step in Rome lest I meet her."

"Oh, you won't meet her. She and her brother start to-night for Naples, and thence they sail to Corsica, and thence to France and homeward."

"Well, for that I am devoutly thankful." I hoped that would end the matter, but it did not.

"Tell me about it," he said. He listened most interestedly to the recital, asking at the end, "And is that all?"

"All? Isn't that enough?"

"And you've never called on her?"

"No."

"And never seen her at her home?"

"No."

"And never told her that you love her?"

"No." Then he laughed heartily. "Give me a copy of that sonnet," he said. "I'll have it sung at your wedding."

"I shall never marry," I replied. "My romance is over ere it is begun. I shall never see her again, and I'll never marry any other girl."

"Oh, pshaw! you make me tired," he said. "You'll marry that girl yet. She'll tell you yes the first time you ask her."

"You say she goes to Naples to-night?"

"Yes, Naples to-night; after a week there, Corsica; by the first of February, Lyons; then Paris by March; and home after a look at the Lake Country."

"How do you know so much about those people's movements?"

"Why, I asked them."

"You talked with them, then?"

“Yes.”

“Did they say anything,—well, anything about me?”

Then Harris laughed so he could not answer for a little. When he spoke he said, “‘I’ve renounced her; I’ll never see her again; I want to forget she lives;’ and, oh, oh, oh, and, ‘Did she say anything about me?’ Say, are you going to Naples to-night? Are you?”

I threw a magazine at his head. He ducked and said, “Yes, she said something about you. Her brother introduced me, and she said, ‘You are the gentleman who was with the young minister who sat at the captain’s table, aren’t you?’

“‘Yes,’ I said. ‘He is my cousin.’

“‘Is he?’ said she. ‘How interesting. What is his name?’

“‘Why, you know his name,’ said the brother. ‘You met him at St. David’s and in the Adirondacks.’

“‘Oh, so I did,’ said she. ‘Where is he now, Mr. Harris? He seemed very nice that last Sunday. He came and spoke about my little part in the service. He hurried away so I couldn’t thank him for his part.’ Then the brother hurried her off.”

“Harris! are you lying?” I asked.

“No. That’s the truth.”

“Then you knew I knew her, before you asked me if I did?”

“Well, yes, I did.”

Then I threw my Baedeker at his head. He dodged again and laughing in great glee said, “See here, kinsman, you’re dangerous. Don’t do that any more. If you happen to hit me and knock me out, I can’t go to Jerusalem with you.”

"Are you going to the Holy Land with me?" I asked incredulously.

"Yes, I am. Made up my mind to-day. Letters from home make it possible. I'm going all right."

"Good!" I said; "we'll call it quits."

All that night I dreamed that I met the maid of honor on the way up Vesuvius, and there was the odor of orange blossoms from the villas that we passed as we ascended.

"And this is Jerusalem. Yonder is Olivet. There is the brook Kidron. It is the old city, but the aroma is gone." Thus, Harris to me. We were in the Holy Land by sufferance of the unholy Turk. We did the things the tourist does. Painting, scripture, poetry, oratory, song have done their best for the old, old land. The Turk has done his worst. Poverty, beggary, and things utterly intolerable are on every hand.

On February first we reached Jerusalem. March first found us in Beirut. Do you know what it means to be be-flead, and be-donkeyed, and be-back-sheeshed, clear to the end of endurance? If not, no words can enlighten you. Language is not equal to the working capacity of one healthy Syrian flea.

One afternoon, as evening was drawing down on the heights above the Sea of Galilee, in the region of old Capernaum, we two pilgrims sat there, wrapt in meditation. From our elevation the water of that storied sea looked blue as sapphire, while the shore outline, far across, was softened by enchantment-lending distance.

There is a remarkable painting by one of the gifted artists of the world, that shows the Christ sitting

alone on these same heights, gazing at the very scene which was spread before our eyes. Remembering that picture, fancy seized me: made me lose myself: made me forget that I was I, and that Harris was Harris. I was a spirit seeing spiritual things. All else was real. The hills were there: the bare rocks, colored by time to yellow-reds and sombre browns, were there: the sea, that lovely sea, where once my Saviour loved to be, lay placid, unswept by storm. A solitary sail of fishermen homeward bound ere night should fall was moving the lazy boat toward the hither shore. Gadara, as Jesus knew it once, far across the water, lifted high her abrupt mass of mountains. Slowly, upon the heights, between us and the sea, a figure took shape—the solitary, lonely figure of a man. The face was hidden, for his gaze was toward the sea. A loose and seamless dress was wrapped about him. One knee was bent; on that an elbow rested. His head was resting in one hand: yet though the face was hidden, it was plain his eyes were fixed as though on something far away: far away over the sea; far away over the mountains; far away over the distant deserts; far away over the vast on-stretching continent of which no man of his age knew aught, save only he; far away over the boundless ocean lying still beyond; far away, over and on, and over and on, until his vision embraced the whole wide world. That figure was the figure of my Lord. My soul saw him, and went out to him in longing love.

The vision passed. Harris and I were alone. The guides and donkeys were far down the hill. The night was falling fast. Reluctantly we left this mount of memory and rapture, to go down to the waiting hostelry below.

XV

THE BUMMERS' CLUB

BEIRUT was the farthest point of our tour. From there we turned our faces homeward. Greenton never looked more beautiful than on the April day of my return. The leaves were just taking on their fresh spring color, and blue and white and yellow crocuses were lifting their small chalices to the sky. The buds on the trees were swelling, and the signs of nature astir for her summer work were on every hand. "Home, sweet home" was dropping in bits of half-sung, half-hummed tones from my lips as the stage rolled up to the old house. It was open, and a group of people, whom I loved dearly, waited to give me greeting; and as they heard the rattle of the Concord coach, they came out upon the porch. There were Joe Smith, Elder and Mrs. Harfis, and a niece of Elder Harfis, Helen Raymond, who was soprano in our church choir. What a reception that was! My hand was extended for the shaking that we Americans love so well, as my foot touched the first step; but ere anyone could take it, Mrs. Harfis threw both her arms around my neck and kissed me heartily. That almost took my breath, then I turned and deliberately kissed Helen Raymond, and that quite as nearly took her breath. "It's great to be a dominie, and come home to your flock," said Joe. "Mrs. Harfis has never kissed me. But she might almost any time," he added.

"How about Helen?" said the elder; and both Joe and Helen blushed furiously.

It might have been awkward but for the announcement of supper. Hunger and the joy of eating home things at the home table, with home friends about, would have made a worse supper like a feast. But, yet—and yet, my eyes went often across to my mother's old place at the board. She was not there. And in the midst of my joy, there was pain. If the rest noticed my look, it only made them all unusually thoughtful for me.

As talk went rambling on, now occupied with questions about my travels, and now giving out items of news about the church, there came an opportunity for me to seek a solution of one problem which had been in my mind unsolved all through these months. It was about Joe, and the fact that presbytery would allow him to preach, being neither minister, licentiate, nor elder. The opportunity came through Joe's speaking about my acquaintance with Mr. Harris.

"Joe," I remarked, "Mr. Harris expects you back in Boston next Tuesday."

Joe's quick answer surprised me.

"Well, the old man won't see me back. Maybe he will some other Tuesday, but not next Tuesday."

"What's the matter with next Tuesday, Joe? Are you going to hold the fort here, and send me off to hunt a new parish?" I asked.

Mrs. Harfis replied before Joe could. Her round face fairly beamed with delight as she said, "Send you off. No indeed. Mr. Smith is good. He is real good. If you were gone, we would want him. But he cannot hold any forts here just yet. He has done his part like a man. But that was not your part. We want you, pastor; we want you."

"The audience is waiting for the first violin," said

Joe. "That's all right. I'm content to be second to you, old boy."

"Well, Joe, if you have been as good a second for the last six months as you were in the revival days, the church has not suffered. And there's a place for you in the Greenton pulpit whenever you desire, as long as I am pastor. You may preach every time you come on your rounds."

"Rounds?" He tossed his head and threw out his hands like a Frenchman. "Rounds? Do you think I'm going back on the road for Murdoch, Stiles, and Harris?"

Then I had to own up that I had not expected any such thing. But the question afforded the opportunity to learn Joe's status with presbytery. He had first been elected elder by the Greenton church, made reader for the Sunday services, and after three months of study had passed sufficient examinations to be provisionally licensed for three months. Elder Harfis told me this, and ended by saying, "The time of that license has just expired."

"But I've not expired," said Joe. "I am to have further examination this fall, and I'll be a full-fledged preacher-bird some day. And I have expectations too, old man. The First Presbyterian Church of Grandview, down the river, wants a superintendent for their mission. They have offered the place to me, and I'm going down there next week to look over the ground."

"So that is why you'll not be in Boston next Tuesday?"

"Yes, that's part of the why. But there's more. If I like the place, and the people like me, and I make up my mind to accept their invitation, I'm coming

back here after Miss Raymond, and she's going down to be my assistant."

My next speech was one of the most stupid a man ever made. What Joe meant ought to have been as plain as day. "Why, but, Joe," was my stammering comment, "what would people say down there if you should take Miss Raymond with you for assistant?"

"Say? What do you suppose they'd say?"

"Well, I suppose they would say it was unconventional, to say the least." I chanced to look at Helen; she was blushing and evidently in great confusion. I saw what a blunder I had made, but before I could repair it, Joe answered:

"No, they wouldn't. They would say, 'How do you do, Mrs. Smith. We are very glad to welcome you, and we hope you'll be very happy.'"

Then I said, "Helen Raymond, I beg your pardon, and I congratulate you both from the bottom of my heart." Then everyone looked happy. And nothing could have been finer than that. Mr. Harfis was rich, and Helen Raymond was good. The elder had no children, so that his property would all go to Helen some day.

The evening that followed was one of pure delight. Ten o'clock came all too quickly, and with it the departure of my guests. How good it was to be in the old home once more! My mother was away, but her holy influence lingered, and memory held communion with her that first night back in the old home. Nothing had changed since her departure. The chairs were in their usual places. The curtains hung just as they always had. The old "what-not" stood in the corner, holding the bits of bric-à-brac my father had brought from Switzerland in the long ago. Some im-

pulse made me go over to sit down upon the floor by the antique piece of furniture as I had often done in childhood, and in a moment I was oblivious of all things save such as memory was bringing back, when a cheery voice called out :

“Hello, Dominie! real Dominie. How are you?” and there stood Tim Wendell, who had entered in his old way, unannounced. I essayed to rise as he crossed the room, but he put out his hand with deprecatory gesture.

“No, don’t get up; sit still. I’ll join you. I’m right glad to see the real dominie. Joe’s good. He’s fine. He can preach—well, yes, he preaches full as well as you do. But he’s only a make-believe dominie, as far as we are concerned.”

“Well, I must say, that’s good!” another voice called out, and there was Joe, hitherto unobserved by either of us. “I’m glad to know your real opinion of me, Tim. But I’ll tell you what, parson, I’ve done what you could never do. I’ve landed that chap in Greenton Presbyterian Church.”

“Is that so, Tim?” I exclaimed.

“Yes, that’s so,” he answered briefly.

Springing to my feet and seizing Wendell’s hand, I pulled him up, throwing my arms around him in a great hug. He wriggled and twisted, succeeding after a little in breaking from the bondage of my arms, when he cried out :

“There, Dominie, that’s enough: I’m not accustomed to that sort of thing.” Then he backed off toward a chair.

“But is it really and truly so?” I persisted, hardly believing his first reply.

“Yes,” said he, “it’s all so.” Then, as he saw me

making for him again, "Keep off, Dominie!" he cried. "I'm dangerous."

"Tim," I said, as we sat down, "I do want to know more about this strange thing. You don't mind my saying strange, for you know it never entered my heart that you would unite with a church. I've known you were a Christian, but I thought you'd go on living as you had, outside the church. Now, tell me how this happened."

There was a moment of silence, then Tim replied:

"Dominie, you know I never believed much in Christians as I saw them. I often said to myself that I'd never join a church and live such a life as I saw men living who called themselves Christians. But I've been watching the life of Elder Harfis for six months, and I've watched that old Scotchman, Jimmie MacNaughton, and they are showing that a Christian profession need be no sham. Then, Bob's boy kept after me until I gave in. Dominie, he's nothing but a kid; but the Scripture's been fulfilled in him: 'and a little child shall lead them.'"

"What about Jimmie MacNaughton?" was my next inquiry.

"Well," Joe began, "you know, he signed the pledge not to drink, at the time of the revival. No one supposed for a moment that he'd keep it. But he has, absolutely. When I came as preacher's dummy, he was standing like a rock. The boys of his past association tried to throw him down, but when a Scotchman says he won't, he won't: that's all. So I made up my mind to use him. He had influence, I knew, with the very fellows that were trying to lure him back to his dram-drinking habits. They were all Bob's tavern bummers. Getting hold of Jimmie, I

said, 'MacNaughton, let's get up a "Bummers' Club," you and I. Let's get those boys to join that have been trying to make you drink. I'll find a room somewhere, and we'll meet once a week and have the best sort of a time.'

"Jimmie took right hold. Bob's boy induced his father to let us have the big old room where I used to show samples, for a meeting every Saturday night. Jimmie coaxed about a half-dozen of the best of the crowd to come the first night, and I told 'em stories about my life on the road. Next week there were more, and ever since last Thanksgiving we've had rousing meetings. A crowd of those chaps come now, and 'no gin' is the pass-word. No ginner can get in until he'll promise to go without gin for two whole days. You know, I said I was going to bust Bob's business, or at least the bar part of it, and I've pretty nearly done it. You come in Saturday night, and I'll show you such a sight as you never saw in all your life. I've got fifty bums who'll be there, every one of 'em sober, and they'll sing, and talk, and pray, so as to astonish you. One of 'em told me he thought 'they was astonishin' God.' This is my last Saturday night, and I'm going to make a big strike. If I win, you'll have the happiest year in this town you ever had."

"What are you going to do, Joe?" I asked.

"I won't tell you. Come and see for yourself."

"But, Joe, I must study Saturday night," I objected. "I must be getting my sermons ready."

"What! You going back to that old racket? Been away six months, seeing the sights of the world, tramping over the land where Jesus walked and talked, and so hard up for ideas that you've got to

stay in your old den on Saturday night? I'm ashamed of you."

That was too close a personal appeal. I answered, "Well, Joe, I'll be there." To speak truth, I was ashamed that I had momentarily declined.

"Of course you'll be there," was the honest man's reply.

The company that gathered in the sample room, that Saturday night, was a strange, new sight to me. The Water Street Mission, in the days of "Rowdy Brown" and "Jerry McAuley," could not far surpass it. That Greenton could produce such a crowd seemed to me incredible.

Those men looked at me in a "what-you-doing-here" manner. Joe saw it.

"Look here, boys," he began. "Don't you mind the parson: he's as good a friend as you'll ever have. You wouldn't have had me here to-night, but for him; and you wouldn't be here without me. This club came out of what he did for me. He's white clear through, whichever way you look, and he's straight-grained. Get up, boys, every one of you, and give the Dominie a cheer. Up with you. Now: Hip! Hip! Hurrah!" And they made that old room ring. Then, while they stood, Joe led off, "Just as I am, without one plea," and they sang it—oh, how they sang it! Could Charlotte Elliot have heard her hymn sung that night, she would have thanked God.

There followed prayers and songs and testimonies, then suddenly Joe turned to Bob's boy, who had been there all the time, saying, "Where's your father?"

"In the bar-room, I suppose," was the answer.

"Go tell him I want him."

What Joe had in mind was beyond conjecture, but

that it had to do with the "big strike" he had said he would make, seemed plain.

Bob came in presently, and his boy followed and sat down by the door. Bob was a big man, fully six feet tall. His forehead was clear and high. He must have turned the scales at two hundred and fifty pounds. His face was very red: he evidently was one of his own best customers. He never became boisterously nor stupidly drunk, but was always more drunk than sober. With a different history he would have been a very handsome man. He had been a familiar sight from my boyhood. An employee of a shoe factory of the town, unmarried, industrious, sober, and always respectful in demeanor, he had been regarded as a good young man, one who would some day be something more than a daily wage earner. But the shoe establishment failed. The men who had depended upon it for a living were scattered abroad. Bob was almost the only one who remained in Green-ton, and to the surprise of everyone he opened a saloon. He had prospered in the wretched business until he had become proprietor of the main hotel of the town, now known as "Bob's" tavern. He himself had developed into a red-faced, coarse-looking vender of wretched drinks, and was surely on the down grade of life.

When on this Saturday night he appeared before the club, he was more red-faced than usual, and evidently further down the grade than when last I saw him. The only helpful influences around him were his wife and boy. He had married a farmer's daughter. Everyone had wondered that she would have him. But their love had begun before Bob lost his factory work, and the girl stood stedfast. She was by nature a lady, and, like many another woman, had thought

she could keep Bob upright in spite of the saloon. She had made his tavern popular by the table she spread, but her heart was slowly breaking.

As for the boy, at the time of his conversion in the great revival, he had absolutely refused to be any longer a mixer of drinks at his father's bar. There had been a little storm over it, but the mother had taken the part of the boy, and together they had broken down the opposition of the father. The boy had started on his journey from the bar to the pulpit.

"Hello, Bob! how are you?" came Joe's cheery voice, as the tavernkeeper entered. "Boys, give Bob a cheer."

They did. Bob stood there, not knowing what was wanted of him, and not in the least understanding this reception. Joe came to his relief in a moment.

"Sit down, Bob. This is your crowd. You used to have 'em out at the bar. I got hold of the whole lot and moved 'em in here. Which is best, boys, bar or club?"

And they roared as one man, "Club, you bet!"

"You know, Bob," Joe continued, "the parson's got home, and I've got to light out. The parson's going to have his innings now, and I expect to go to Grandview, away down the river. The parson can run the church, but he don't know the first thing about running this club. He'd bust it up in a month. There's just one man in Greenton who can run it, and that's Bob Hazeltine. He can do it." He turned to the crowd. "Say, boys, do you like Bob?"

"You bet we do," came the answer.

"Now, boys, Bob's going to lead this club. He didn't know it five minutes ago, but he knows it now. But, boys, he can't lead this club, and tend bar too can he?"

Again they roared out, " You bet he can't ! "

" See here, boys," Joe went on, " I'm going to be married, in church, three weeks from next Tuesday, to Miss Raymond. The relatives will sit in the front pews, middle aisle. Then there'll be a block of fifty seats reserved for you, and you're going to come, with such clothes as you've got,—the best you've got, of course,—and each of you will wear a badge, the badge of the Greenton Good Bummers' Club, and you'll be marched in together, and Mr. Robert Hazeltine will lead you, and he'll be proud, and you'll be proud, and when I come in, I'll see you, and I'll be proud. But he can't do it and tend bar, can he, boys ? "

And once more they fairly yelled, " You bet he can't."

Then, like a flash, Joe turned to where Bob was seated, and extended his hand. Bob rose and took it. Steadily, but very quietly, Joe began :

" Mr. Robert Hazeltine, there's a man in you somewhere, a whole man, if he hasn't been drowned with drink. You used to be the whitest man in the whole crowd, in the old days of Lamb's shoe factory. But you're not white now. You're red and bloated and beery, and down in your heart you don't like it. When you stop to think, you hate yourself. You've got a boy: there's not another like him in this town. He's going to college. Tim Wendell says he'll lead his class right from the start, and keep it up clear through. He'll be a preacher, Bob ; that's what that boy'll be. Do you want him to feel ashamed to mention his father before the people of the church where he'll be settled ? Do you want that, Bob ? It's up to you, old man. What'll it be: club or bar ? "

The sight of Joe Smith and Bob Hazeltine facing each other was one never to be forgotten. Bob had sold Joe many a drink. Memory must have been busy in both of them. Bob puffed, tried to speak, stammered, but was relieved by a cry of: "Don't cut her out, Bob." And then another voice broke in: "Bust the bottles, Bob: bust the bottles." Joe said never a word, but stood looking that struggling man straight in the face, still gripping his hand. Then the boy Charlie came across from where he had been seated, laid his hand on his father's shoulder, and turned to the expectant company, saying:

"Men, this is *not* old Bob the tavern-keeper; this is my father, Mr. Robert Hazeltine."

Then to his father he said quietly:

"Father, I've settled it for you."

Bob dropped Joe's hand, which all this time he had held, and threw his arms around his boy. "Yes, my son, you've settled it," he cried. "I'll give it up. I'm pretty well soaked to-night. I'll have an awful struggle to stand, but I'll give it up. You'll stand by me, boys, won't you? You'll help me, Charlie, won't you? Joe, you can't: you'll be gone. But —"

"But I'll stand by you, Robert Hazeltine," I said, filled with emotion at the scene, as I rose and went over to his side, "and Jesus Christ will stand by you if you'll let Him, for He has come to save you." And at that the bummers in that room burst out with the Gospel song:

"I'll stand by you till the morning,
I've come to save you, do not fear."

When the noise had subsided, Bob said, "Come with me, boys. All come. You, Joe; you, parson; you,

Charlie." He led the way to the bar-room, a place that had been all too familiar to so many of that company. Inside were a half dozen loafers. Two men were drinking at the bar.

"Boys," Bob began, addressing them, "that's the last drink that will ever be sold over this bar. I don't want to turn any man out of my house, but I must ask you all to walk out of this room. I've turned over a new leaf. In five minutes this room will be closed and locked, and its lights out. The boys have made me leader of Joe Smith's club of bummers. Joe's going to leave and the boys wanted me to take his place, but they told me I couldn't lead the club and run a bar. They put it square up at me, club or bar, and the club wins. I've got the fight of my life ahead of me, I know; but nobody ever saw Bob Hazeltine run away from a fight, and the parson there says Jesus Christ will be my backer, and I'm going to give Him the chance. Walk out, boys: you've had your last drink in Bob's tavern."

Slowly, one by one, all went out. Bob put out the lights and locked the door. What Joe had said nine months before, in the meeting which he and Elder Harfis had held, had come true. He had "busted Bob's bar."

When Joe Smith and Robert Hazeltine came into church together on Sunday morning, there was a stir in the congregation. The people could not understand, when they were assembling, why five pews on each side of the middle aisle close in front were kept free. They remained empty until just before the opening of the service. Then Joe and Bob walked down the middle aisle together. To see Hazeltine in

church was most unusual. But when immediately behind the first pair came fifty other men who were at once recognized as Jimmie MacNaughton's brigade of bums, surprise and curiosity were at their height. They were not a well-dressed body of men. They were neither handsome nor attractive, but the faces were no longer besotted. Had anyone said, even after the wonderful revival, that on the first Sunday after my return from a prolonged absence, fifty of Greenton's worst characters would come to my church, led by the keeper of the town tavern, he would have been scouted by me as a dreamer.

The programme that day had its surprises even for Joe. Just as the people rose for the invocation, Henderson and Wendell entered the church together. That something memorable was once more to occur in Greenton church was probable, but what form it would take, no tongue could have told.

The congregation was large, for the news was broadcast that the pastor was at home once more. The Scripture lesson was the story of Zaccheus. His confession made my text: "And Zaccheus said—if I have taken anything from any man—I restore him fourfold." I told the story of Jimmie MacNaughton. Saved by the revival from the sin of drink, and set to service by the tact and resourcefulness of Joe Smith, he had formed the club composed of the men who had assembled for worship with us. They had been drunkards, and had been brought to Christ. The remarkable meeting of the night before was then described, with Bob in the rôle of Zaccheus. Bob had been taking things from men for a long time, taking health, taking character, taking homecomforts, taking money, taking power to work, taking hope of salva-

tion, taking self-respect, taking sense of honor and giving in exchange nothing except the drink which had robbed them. And now he had been suddenly brought by the love and grace of God to say, "I will stop all this. I will make such restitution as I am able." I finished, "Beloved people, this man is no longer Bob the rum-seller; this man is Mr. Robert Hazeltine, our fellow-citizen, the proprietor of the Greenton Inn." Just then Jimmie MacNaughton rose and said, "Noo, lads: here's to Robbie: Hip, hip," and they rose with three great cheers.

As the noise of the cheers subsided, another volume of sound took its place. The whole congregation, led by the club, was singing, "Just as I am."

There was nothing more for me to do. The meeting had gone out of my control. Before the singing had ended, Henderson was seen coming down the aisle. When the song ceased he was facing the congregation. He turned to me first, saying, "I'm richt glad to see ye in yer pulpit again, Dominie, but ye had na expectation o' seein' me here, I doot."

Then he turned back to the congregation.

"Ye will hae a' forgotten me, but the preacher hasna. I'm the man who made all the stir here because I caught a big trout in yon river, aboot a year syne, an' I hae come back again to catch anither. I'm David Henderson. I came to town last night. I heard a muckle stir in the tavern aboot ten o'clock, an' I asked what it was a' aboot. An' they telt me Bob had closed his bar. So I hunted up Bob and asked him.

"'Ye've closed yer bar, Bob?' said I.

"'Yes,' said he.

"'For guid and a', Bob?' said I.

“ ‘ Yes,’ said he.
“ ‘ Ye’re a fool, Bob,’ said I.
“ ‘ Like enough,’ said he.
“ ‘ Open her up again, Bob,’ said I.
“ ‘ Never,’ said he.
“ ‘ What made ye dae it, man ? ’ I asked him.
“ ‘ Joe Smith, an’ the boys, an’ Charlie,’ said he.
“ ‘ Who’s Charlie ? ’ said I.
“ ‘ My boy,’ said he.
“ ‘ Ye’ll lose money, Bob,’ I telt him.
“ ‘ Likely,’ said he.
“ ‘ What did ye make off the bar, Bob ? ’ said I.
“ ‘ Fifteen hundred,’ said he.
“ ‘ What did ye make off yer hoose otherways ? ’ said I.
“ ‘ My livin’,’ said he.
“ ‘ Nothin’ more ? ’ said I.
“ ‘ Not a hap’orth,’ said he.
“ ‘ Ye’re a fool, Bob,’ said I.
“ ‘ Like enough,’ said he.
“ ‘ Open her up, Bob, Monday,’ said I.
“ ‘ Never,’ said he.
“ An’ then I went off to bed. Noo, friends, see here : Bob’s too guid a man to be let to fail. He’s goin’ to run that club, he an’ my countryman there, Jimmie. That club’ll be worth money to this toon, an’ worth more than money too, I doot. Some one’s got to take care o’ Bob. He’s made a big sacrifice for principle. Who’s got principle to take interest in him ? I’ll tell ye what I’ll dae. I spend five hundred a year on the cigars that I smoke, an’ on what I treat my friends wi’. Now, I’ll gie that five hundred to pay Bob for what he’s goin’ to lose, if ye’ll gie the ither thousand. An’ I’ll stop smokin’, the day I ken

that ye have raised that thousand. Bob'll stop drinkin', an' I'll stop smokin'. What do ye say?"

Then he sat down, and, before my astonishment passed, up rose Alexander Hobart. A sudden fear seized me. This was the man who had threatened to run me out of town. He had not succeeded, but it had not been his fault. He had been my thorn in the flesh all that summer. What he was about to do puzzled me. "I'm glad to see the pastor back," he began. "I hated him last June: I meant to drive him out of this town. I told Mr. Henderson so, or he heard me say so. But that's all gone. I'm going to stand by the pastor, and I will meet Mr. Henderson's offer half way. I will give another five hundred."

As he sat down, Joe began to sing, and the congregation joined:

"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me:
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see."

When the singing ended, Elder Harfis was on his feet. "I will give that last five hundred," he said. And then David Henderson prayed. The benediction followed that, and the wonderful service was over.

XVI

I VISIT DUQUEBORO

A LETTER postmarked Duqueboro, in a very illegible hand, was in my morning mail. It had not been written by Henderson or Harry Sinclair. It read :

“DEAR SIR:

“The Committee on Supplies of the Kir Jear Presbyterian Church of Duqueboro invites you to supply our pulpit on the last Sunday of November. Hoping it will be possible for you to give us this pleasure, I am,

“Yours truly,
“LEWIS JORDAN, Chm.”

My reply went by return mail.

“Lewis Jordan, Esq.,
“Duqueboro, Pa.

“MY DEAR SIR:

“Acknowledging your letter received this morning, I thank you for the courtesy, but must beg leave to decline. Mr. Henderson has given me to understand that your pulpit is vacant, and my presence there would mean to the people that I was a candidate for the vacant place. That I can never be.

“Yours most sincerely,”

The following week came another letter from Mr. Jordan.

"MY DEAR SIR:

"Your valued favor was duly laid before the committee. I am instructed to say,—It is true we have no pastor, but we hear no candidates in our pulpit. The people know that well. You would not be looked upon in that light. A committee is away every Sabbath, seeking a pastor. You are invited on the suggestion of Mr. Henderson. Hoping you will reconsider, I am as before,

"Yours truly,
"LEWIS JORDAN, Chm."

To this I replied after consulting Tim Wendell. "That seems all straight," he said. "Go on and have a good time. I wouldn't mind going to see that old Scotch duffer myself."

"See here, Tim, you mustn't call David Henderson 'an old Scotch duffer' to me. He's been too good to me."

"All right, Dominie."

So I wrote to Mr. Jordan, accepting his invitation. There had been no vacation for me that summer, partly because of my long absence abroad, and partly because Greenton was full of summer boarders. Our church was well attended all summer long, and my work was delightful. But when November came, a very natural reaction set in, and the invitation to a brief change was most welcome.

The night before my departure, Elder Harfis and Wendell were sitting with me in my study. A carriage stopped before the house, and presently Henderson stood unannounced before us. Ere a word of greeting was spoken, he said:

"All you lack of your boon companions is the blasphemer, I doot. Ye've got the elder, and ye've

got the infidel. Are ye plannin' a sermon or discussin' a doctrine?"

"Neither," was my reply. "These good friends have come in to pass an hour and say good-bye, ere I start for Duqueboro in the morning." We three had risen when he entered, and I said, "Let's be seated, friends." He shook his head.

"I wad be kennin' that ye were goin' to Duqueboro," he said. "I was on business in Saratoga and I had a leetle leisure, an' I came to drive ye to the train. An' I've a fine span here, but there's only seats for twa."

"Thank you, Mr. Henderson, but we're not going to Duqueboro," said Wendell. "This will do us for a while. And if you had four seats, I wouldn't ride with you. I'd be afraid you'd jump, and upset the carriage, as you did my canoe."

"Hoot, man. Ye jumped yersel'. I didna." Then there was a great laugh, in which Henderson joined, though he stuck to his text as he said, "Ye did, ye did, man." Then abruptly, "But where's the blasphemer?"

"Oh, you mean Mr. Smith?" said Elder Harfis.

"Yes, that wild Joe man."

"Oh, he's not a blasphemer nor wild. He may have been, but he is not now. He's married to my niece, I might almost say my daughter, and he's mission superintendent for the Presbyterian church in Grandview."

"An' where's Grandview? In the mountains, I doot."

"No," I answered now. "It is down the Hudson River. It is an old city with a great church and a fine mission plant, and my friend is doing just such

work there as he did here in my absence. You know he filled my pulpit."

"A mission, is it? Weel, God's grace is great, that He forgives the blasphemer and puts him in a mission. Ye're right, man. He's no blasphemer. But it's a new idea o' God's power that's comin' to me. I wadna hae thought He could hae done it."

"Done what?" said I.

"Made a mission manager out o' that wild New Orleans man. Oh, he was scandalous. Talk about God makin' a fish swallow Jonah. That was naethin' to this He's done. Yes, I'll tak' it back about the blasphemer, but I'll no tak' it back about the infidel. He's no fit company for a preacher an' an elder."

"But I know an elder that fished with him all day," said Tim; "was he fit company for that elder?"

"Man, there was no preacher along. I said fit company for a preacher and an elder."

"But he's no infidel; he's an elder, too," said Mr. Harfis.

"Man, ye don't mean to tell me that yon unbeliever is an elder?"

"Yes, he's an elder in our Greenton church."

"An' has he had the hands o' ordination on his head, an' he not believe in the deil?"

"See here, Mr. Henderson." Tim was speaking. "I have learned some things since you hooked that trout and we talked by the bridge."

"Always learnin' an' never comin' to the knowledge o' the truth, I doot," said Henderson.

"Well, I've got hold of some truth. I may as well be honest. I thought that day at the bridge you were one of those religious talking men that most people call hypocrites. But when Joe busted Bob's bar, and

you put up five hundred dollars, and then stopped smoking, breaking what was probably a life-long habit for no reason but to show Bob how will and consecration could defeat appetite, I learned what God's grace can do. I've changed my mind about you. Now let's allow belief in the devil to rest. I believe in God and I believe in you, and I believe in both so much there's no room left between God and you for any devil."

"Guid, man, guid," said Henderson. "We'll let the deil rest. He must be needin' one badly. But ye're wrang about me. I had to stop smokin'. How could I gie up five hundred dollars, an' afford the cigars too? It was necessary, I doot." Then after a pause, "So the unbeliever has become an elder? An' I wad be layin' on ma hands too." We had been standing all this time. He came up to Tim suddenly. "I wad pray; kneel doon, man; kneel doon." What was coming no one knew, but I humored his strange mood, and knelt, and the others followed the example. Then Henderson laid his hands on Tim's head, saying, "O Lord, we dedicate the infidel to Thee. Thou disna care that he has been an infidel. It hasna hurt Thee at all. An' it hasna hurt us, because we never agreed wi' him; an' it hasna hurt him, because he had too good sense to believe what he said he did. An' so I make him elder by the layin' on o' hands, an' I gie him the right han' o' fellowship, an' welcome him to take part wi' us in oor service and meenistry. Amen."

Then he turned to me and said, "I'll be at the door at seven. Be a' ready. Good night." And without once sitting down he walked out.

* * * * *

When morning found Henderson and me in Duquesne after a night in the sleeper, and we went out to

his carriage which was waiting, a sentence from Harry's letter received in Rome recurred to me. It was about the smoke. No mortal ever saw such a dingy, dirty, forlorn, badly lighted, poorly ventilated railroad station as was that in Duqueboro. When we emerged from its dismalness, the whole gloom came to view. It was London fog, black and impenetrable, but without the sickly yellow tinge.

"And is this Duqueboro?" I managed to say.

"What else wad it be? Did you ever see anything so fine?"

"Well, I can't say whether it is fine or coarse," was my answer. "I can't see it. Where is it?"

"Man, it's here all aboot ye. The smoke's only oor discipline. It keeps risin' and risin' until the midday. Every day it does so. D' ye ken what the Scripture says, 'The smoke o' their torment ascendeth forever'? This is the smoke o' oor torment."

How the driver engineered the carriage through the narrow, crowded, poorly paved streets was mystery to me. But he did it, and we passed into suburban districts that were beautiful in spite of the smoke-laden air.

Henderson's home was a revelation to me. Not only was the house complete in every appointment, and finished within and without with rare taste and elegance, but the family that dwelt there was in all respects almost ideal. The man was master, and his mastery was plain at once; but it was the mastery of kindness, affection, capacity and self-control. Mrs. Henderson was a beautiful woman, apparently entirely schooled in her husband's moods and tenses, and it might almost be said that the grammar of her action was a right interpretation of his desires. Her initia-

tive was inspired by him, but her outworking of it was entirely on lines of her own.

There were two young people in the family. The older was a daughter, Julia, a young woman of twenty-two or twenty-three, not beautiful, but possessing many of the Scotch characteristics of her father. She was very hearty in her manner, and in conversation the play of her face was a charm. The other child was a boy of thirteen, David, Jr. He won my heart at once. There was a frank openness about him that was refreshing. He said what was in his mind regardless of life's conventionalities, and the friendship that sprang up between him and me on that visit has never been disturbed. Before the first breakfast was over I felt thoroughly acquainted in that family. As the meal progressed, David, Jr., brought confusion to his father suddenly, and amusingly to me. In a lull in the table talk, he turned abruptly to me.

"Say, you could have got here all right if daddy hadn't come after you, couldn't you?"

"Why, yes, of course. What made you think I couldn't?"

"Be still, David," said the mother. "What will our guest think of you?"

"That does not disturb me, Mrs. Henderson. I know boys well. I haven't forgotten that I was a boy once."

"But I didn't think you couldn't," persisted the boy. "I knew any man that had been to Europe could get out to Duqueboro alone. But daddy said you was only a country parson, and he was afraid —"

"Hush, David," said Mrs. Henderson.

"But, mamma, he did say he was afraid the parson was too green to be trusted alone so far from home. And when you said —"

"Hoot, laddie. Ye'll make the preacher think ye've no manners. An' if I should tell him I didna say any sic thing, he wadna believe ye any mair, but wad a'ways ca' ye that fibbin' lad o' Duqueboro."

"But, daddy, you did say so. An' when mamma said, if that preacher was such a big goose he could not get here alone she did not want to see him, you said you were afraid, anyway. An' that was the reason why you telegraphed Mr. Harris in Boston if he could get away to go on that trip to Europe."

That speech would have abashed the ordinary man, but it in no way disturbed the Scotchman. "Ye've a gey memory, laddie, an' ye're like your mither. Ye remember some things that ye don't remember but imagine, and ye don't remember some things that ye do remember but willna confess, an' ye're no an illustration that 'oot o' the mouth o' babes has been perfected praise,' for it's no praise to ye to reveal the secrets o' the family an' to bring confusion to yer mither. An' ye'll hold quiet now while the preacher eats his breakfast, I doot."

"Oh, let the boy talk," I said. "He enlightens me. He makes me know that one person believes me capable of looking out for myself."

"That's what I do," said the boy, and then went at his breakfast with a will.

"How long have you known my cousin, Mr. Henderson?"

"Your cousin? How wad I know your cousin, man?"

"I don't know how. But you evidently do. David here says you telegraphed for him to sail with me on *The Westernland*."

"Mr. Harris, you mean? Is Mr. Harris yer cousin, then?"

"Yes."

"An' how wad I be knowin' that? But he's gey fine, that Harris. I met him at Interlaken in a hotel filled with heathen. He was the only Christian there, an' he didna know what reelegion was. But I telt him. We traveled thegither, an we cam' hame thegither. We've corresponded ever since."

"Did you know Joe Smith was a salesman for his firm?"

"No, I wadna be knowin' that. It's not so, I doot."

"Yes, it is so, or it was so until Joe began to preach."

"That's a fine thing ye did, convertin' that wild' blasphemer," he said, and he steered the conversation away from Mr. Harris and the breakers on which young David had cast him.

At family prayers he brought out the Bible I had first seen in his hand in the train. "Do you mind the buik?" he said.

"Yes, that's an old friend," I answered, "if that is the book you had in the train."

"Of coarse. What ither buik wad I be bringin'?"

"Are you going to start another discussion about religion?" I asked.

"Man, man, ye're hopeless! Wad I be discussin' wi' ye, and puttin' ye to shame, an' ye a guest in ma ain hoose? Na, na. I brought the buik to mak' ye mindfu' o' the strange way in which God leads us a'." And then he read the One Hundred and Third Psalm, and as he ended said, "Now let us a' repeat the Twenty-third Psalm." When that was finished,

he continued, "That's it, lad. He was yer Shepherd yon day in the train. He led ye to the seat in the car by me. It was His hand that opened my buik, I doot. An'a' the rest has been His leadin'. It was God's goodness and mercy. There's no chances wi' God. Now ye'll pray and then David must gang awa' to school."

That night after dinner Henderson took me to his own office. He pushed a box of cigars across the table, saying, "Ye smoke sometimes, I ken. 'Tis a bad habit, a vera bad habit. I've gi'en it up, ye ken. There's no Scripture against gie'n' it up. The Scripture says, 'the smokin' flax shall ye na quench,' but it doesna say the smokin' tobacco ye shall na quench; so I've gi'en it up. But yon box contains some vera good aids to the bad habit. Ye'll tak' one, I doot."

Just after my cigar was lighted, the butler entered with Harry Sinclair's card. "Bring him here," was Henderson's order. So in he came. More than three years had flown since we had looked into each other's faces. He was much stouter than at St. David's. His face was quite ruddy, his head fast growing bald. There was about him the appearance of one well satisfied with good living and with himself. His tongue, however, ran just as had been its wont. While he talked, he smoked. His first cigar was done, and another lighted, before mine was half finished. After much general conversation, he suddenly accosted me on a more personal matter.

"Old boy," he exclaimed, "why don't you get married? You look as if you wanted care. Oh, no: don't look at your clothes; they're all right. But your face doesn't sparkle as it used to; you look one-sided, half-done, I don't know what all."

Before it was possible for me to answer, Henderson took up the theme.

"Harry Sinclair, you let him an' his marryin' alone. All he is, I've made him, an' some o' these days, when I get ready, I'm goin' to get him married. He'll tell ye he is dead in love wi' a lass he saw at your weddin'." I started guiltily. "But it's na so," he continued. "He never saw her but once in his life, an' that was three years syne. But you let him alone. I've other plans for him. Do you hear, Harry Sinclair? You let him alone."

"Yes, I'll let him alone. I can't do anything else. I've no chance. Neither have you. But as for his falling in love with a girl at my wedding, that's all gammon. There was only one girl at my wedding that would have attracted him at all, and he didn't look at her twice, nor she at him. When Phyllis found you were going to have the old boy for your guest, she wrote to that girl, asking her here to visit, and told her the best man would be in town for a visit. Phyllis wants to get them together again. But the girl had other engagements."

Then I said a little prayer of thanksgiving for my deliverance, and yet I did wish she had accepted.

"I tell ye, Harry," insisted Henderson, "you and Phyllis must leave that marriage business alone, or ye'll keep him an old bachelor a' his days. Old bachelors are nuisances. There's na place for them in this world or the next, I doot. What the Scriptures think aboot old bachelors is made plain i' the record o' the Flood. God drooned every one o' them. Na one o' them went into the Ark."

In the laugh that followed, I seized my opportunity to speak.

"You talk as if you were kings or emperors, and I was your subject," I said, "and you could marry me when you pleased, and to whom you pleased. But you're vastly mistaken. There's only one woman living whom I would marry. She doesn't care for me. She never thinks of me. Mr. Henderson says I never saw her but once. It makes no difference to either of you who she is, and I won't tell. But I've seen her six different times, six times too many—and I'll never see her again. Now let's drop the marrying business," I begged.

Harry told me about Phyllis; also about the baby, a boy, named Wayne Sinclair. He was enthusiastic, too, about his parish. To see his intense interest was delightful. All at once, he said, "I tell you what, 'the Church' is the only institution in the world for a man to work in. You ought to be in 'the Church,' old boy."

Before I could answer, Henderson was on his feet, towering over Harry.

"Hoot, Harry Sinclair," he cried, "wi' your 'the Church' an' your institutions. I kent ye when ye was a wee bairn. What do ye ken aboot 'the Church'? Isna he in 'the Church,' and am I no in 'the Church'? What d' ye mean by 'ought to be in "the Church" '?"

"Why, Mr. Henderson, you know history," answered Harry, in nowise daunted. "You know Jesus founded the true Church. You know Paul organized the Church of Jesus Christ in the British Isles. You know how Rome became corrupt, and how the Pauline Church of England was kept pure. You know how all the sects of to-day came only from dissenters, who were too carnal and worldly to submit to the holy rule of the mother Church. The Presbyterians arose from

some wicked English 'Roundheads' who murdered the Lord's Anointed, and —"

But he got no further. The Scotch Presbyterian, with the blood of the Covenanters in his veins, burst out:

"Man! Harry! I kent ye when ye were a wee bairn, an' ye come tellin' me the old lees aboot St. Paul and corruption? Ye're a Papist. Your church is a Henry the Eighth Papistical church. I wonder ye hav'na six wives yersel'! 'Mither Church'! Hoot! 'Roundheads'! Hoot, hoot! yer church is a rebellious child o' the Scarlet Woman. An' 'Roundheads'! John Knox, an' John Calvin, an' John Huss! 'Roundheads,' are they? Hoot! I've shame o' ye, Harry: for I kent ye when ye were a wee bairn." He stopped for breath.

The outburst filled me with fear lest Harry should take it in high dudgeon. Instead, he laughed and laughed, until, holding his sides and with tears rolling down his cheeks, he rose and extended his hand to Mr. Henderson. "I'd give one hundred dollars," he said, "to have you in my vestry. If you only belonged to 'the Church,' how you would champion her cause. I've not been so delighted since I came to Duqueboro. There's not a man out at 'The Redeemer' who can stand for his religion like that. You're a wonderful man, Mr. Henderson," he finished; "'tisn't strange my father and you were friends."

Henderson looked hard at him a moment. "Lad, lad," he said sorrowfully, "were ye playin' wi' the old man? Did ye speir that nonsense as an experiment? Was ye tryin' to get me started on a discussion?"

Sinclair laughed again, long and heartily. Henderson kept on. "Your father and I were

friends. Ye say 'it wasna strange.' I say it too. I saved him a hundred thousand dollars in a law-suit. He was an Episcopalian, an' yet I did that for him. The man who tried to cheat him out o' his property was an Episcopalian too, an' he'd ha' dune it but for me. But I've never had to save a hundred thousand dollars for a Presbyterian because another Presbyterian was tryin' to cheat him. Presbyterians don't cheat each other if they can help it."

By this time Harry and I had become so boisterous in our mirth that Mrs. Henderson came to the office door. "What's the cause of the merriment?" she asked. "Is the new guest a wit?"

"No, madam," I replied, "Mr. Henderson is the wit. He and Mr. Sinclair have been having a little discussion about religion."

"Well," said Harry, "it's time I said good-night. I must get back to Phyllis and the baby. Good-night, Mrs. Henderson; good-night, old chum; good-night, Sir Knight David Henderson, Defender of the Faith once delivered to the saints—Presbyterian saints," and away he went.

With Harry's departure, we adjourned from the office to the library, where David, Jr., was studying. Looking up from his book, he announced, "There's an after-season football game to-morrow, between Duqueboro and Lanborne. Wouldn't you like to go?"

"Yes," I answered, "but you'll be in school."

"Oh, no," he replied. "School's over for the day at two o'clock. I can take you all right. We'll have the carriage over. But perhaps you'll have to help me with my Latin after we come home. Will you?"

"Why, yes, of course I will," was my answer, for I

wanted to go, and I liked the boy. "But why don't you get the Latin before you go?"

"Oh, we can't, don't you know? There won't be time after school, before the game."

"Well, David, wouldn't it be nice if you had it every bit before you went?"

"Why, of course, but ——"

"Well, we'll do it. We'll do it now. We'll read the translation now, and we'll talk over the syntax as we drive to the game."

So I sat down with David, Jr., and we went through all the "Cæsar" he was likely to have for two days. It was bedtime when that was done. As we were about to say good-night, he said in true boy fashion:

"Say! I like you tip-top. You know a lot of Latin. How'd you learn it so's not to forget it?"

"Why, that's easy," I returned. "I keep in practice. Mr. Wendell and I often spend evenings together reading Latin. Your father knows Mr. Wendell."

"Oh, yes, he's the man that tipped my father out of the boat when he caught the big trout. But say! I like you a lot better than I do Felix. He can't read Latin like you."

"Now, David, who's Felix?" I asked. "You see I don't know your school friends by name as you do."

"School friends? What you giving us?" He fairly roared with delight. "There isn't a boy at school named Felix. I mean Julia's steady."

"What?" I exclaimed. "What's a steady? And what's Julia's steady's other name?"

"Why, Ardman," he answered, ignoring my first question. "Don't you know Felix Ardman? He's Major Ardman's son. Major Ardman's my father's best friend. He lives up at the top of this avenue."

"I'm much obliged, David," I said; "I've got hold of all that. Now, what's a steady?"

"Oh, you're fresh," he said. "You know a lot of Latin, but you're fresh. And a steady? Why, a steady's a fellow that comes to see a girl every night. He's in the parlor now with Julia. They're going to be married next spring, after Easter."

With that David, Jr., started for bed, and I followed. My host went with me to my room.

"Ye must be unco weary," he said. "Between my boy an' Sinclair we have kept ye up too late. Harry smoked too long an' talked too much nonsense. He's livin' too high, I doot. Did ye see his face? Port in the one cheek, sherry in the other. They're a pair o' killers," he went on, as he stood in the doorway. "A little Scotch whiskey once in a while, juist a wee drap, ye ken, is good for the complexion. But don't ye listen to his blandishments about lasses. I'll take care o' ye. There's lots o' lasses ye never saw. I ken one —oh, I ken one. When ye see her ——"

"Yes, *when* I see her," I laughed. "I begin to think you are like a boy I used to play with, who was always going to have a new kite, or a new sled, or a new fish-pole. He could tell just how they looked, and what they cost, and he was going to have them when his father came home from Troy, or when his father had sold his pigs. But he *never* had them."

"Hoot, lad! d' ye think I'm like yon lad?" he remonstrated. "Do I luik like a man that luiks like a lad? D' ye ever hear me talk with nothin' to talk aboot, like a lad? Maybe ye think there's nae sic a lass? Is that it? Losh, man! d' ye think old David's maybe leein' a little?"

"No, I don't quite think that," I replied; "I think there are plenty of girls that —"

"No sic a thing, man," he interrupted. "There's only one. She's the most beautiful woman I ever saw, an' ye ken I've seen a guid many women in ma day."

"Are you quite sure? 'Most beautiful' is a pretty strong expression. Isn't there a little Scotch exaggeration —?"

"Exaggeration?" he burst out. "Exaggeration! Me, the most reelegious man in a' Duqueboro? Exaggeration? Me, the best elder in Kir Jear Presbyterian Kirk? Exaggeration? Losh, man! I never exaggerate. Do I luik like a man that exaggerates? Why, exaggeration is leein', man, an' no Scotchman lees when he doesna want to."

I managed to say through my laughter, "Well, don't let a little thing like that cut you up so. That was only a bit of fun, you know."

"Fun?" indignantly. "Is it that ye ca' it? To say 'Scotch exaggeration' to an elder is fun, is it? Oh, man, ye're ma guest, or I'd argue wi' ye. But honest, noo," and there was a rich twinkle in his eye, "there's none like her. My own lass is fine, but I never thought o' her for ye. But this one! oh, man, this one! ye'll say so yersel'. An' ye'll no tell me, after ye see her, anything aboot 'Scotch exaggeration.' Good-night, now—good-night," with a hearty grip of my hand. "Don't mind the butler in the mornin'. Don't shoot him for a burglar." And away he went.

XVII

I LEARN MORE ABOUT LEWIS JORDAN

ON Saturday morning my host said, "Man, ye'll be preparin' the sermon the day, an' I'll be gaein' to the city. Ye'll have no disturbance. If the lad comes haverin' round, pack him off. I'm awa' noo."

An hour after, I started for a stroll, and passed Julia Henderson on the porch. She stopped me by saying:

"Do you know where Grandview is?"

"Yes," I replied.

"Is it on your route homeward?"

"Well, almost. I pass it. It is on the opposite side of the Hudson, you know."

"Would it trouble you very much to be my escort there when you go home?"

"Nothing would give me greater pleasure," was my answer.

She had letters in her hands, and the thought came to me that something in those letters had prompted her question. The coincidence of her visiting Grandview, and of Joe's being in the same city struck me oddly, but I passed it off as one of those constantly occurring accidental things, and went for my stroll.

That night at dinner Julia said, "Daddy, may I go to Grandview? Our guest says he will be my escort."

"For why wad ye be goin' to Grandview?" was the

"I had a letter from Alice this morning, and she wants me to visit her before I am married."

"Alice?" I said. "Pardon me, Miss Henderson, but may I ask what Alice?"

"Why, yes: why not? Alice Alcorn, my school friend at Dow's Crossing."

"Lass, ye canna go, I doot. The preacher canna be bothered wi' sic baggage as a girl like you."

"Oh, I'll be glad to have her for company, Mr. Henderson," I said.

So it was arranged that I should remain longer than I had intended, so that Julia might prepare for her journey. On Monday I wrote to Joe that I would spend the next Sunday in Grandview. By return mail came a letter from him, asking me to be his guest while there. He did not happen to be acquainted with Miss Alcorn, but that need make no difference. He would be delighted to see me. And if he did not know Miss Alcorn, he did know a girl who was a teacher in his mission, who was the loveliest girl he had ever seen, and Helen said she was just the girl for a wife for me.

I showed the letter to Henderson, who growled out, "I want that Joe Smith and his Helen to let ye alone wi' their loveliest girls. Ye're goin' to marry the girl I telt ye aboot. An' as for stayin' at Joe Smith's an' sleepin' in a missionary's bed, ye're goin' to do nae sic thing. Ye'll stay at the Balustrade. I've engaged yer rooms a'ready, an'—"

"But, Mr. Henderson, what do you know about the Balustrade? You did not know where Grandview was a week ago, and you asked if it was not in the mountains."

"Man, I did not ask if it was not in the mountains.

I LEARN MORE ABOUT LEWIS JORDAN 207

I said it is in the mountains, I doot. That is no askin' a question. An' besides, I saw a man, the day, who knows all about Grandview. The Balustrade's the best place in Grandview." So answer went back to Joe, telling him of Henderson's action, but assuring him I would spend all the time with him that was possible.

Sunday was a delightful day and the Kir Jear Church was well filled. Mr. Lewis Jordan had not called upon me, which I thought strange. At the church door Mr. Henderson introduced me to several men, and of them Mr. Jordan was one. His face seemed familiar, but I could not recall what made it so. I was well into my discourse when my eyes met those of Lewis Jordan, with a look that brought the man before me exactly as I had seen him about six weeks before in Greenton Church. That look almost cost me the rest of my sermon. I realized that I was trapped. That committee that was out every Sabbath hunting for a pastor had been in my own church, and had followed up the visit with the correspondence. There was no use in being angry. I had been outwitted by Mr. Lewis Jordan, that was all.

There was silence between Henderson and me as we walked homeward, until just before reaching his house. It gave me abundant time to grow indignant at the trick that had been played upon me, and when my host began, "Ye was flurried the day. Ye was rattled, I doot. Did ye forget what ye had committed to memory, man?" I blazed out, "I commit nothing to memory. I speak from my heart, as the hour demands. But I was amazed, Mr. Henderson, that anyone calling himself a Christian should be guilty of such arts as Lewis Jordan played me with."

"Lewis Jordan knows nothin' aboot arts ; he's a lawyer."

"That will not do, Mr. Henderson. He wrote me I would not be considered a candidate ; said committees were away hearing candidates every Sabbath, and —"

"Losh, man ! is that what ye ca' arts ? That's the verra truth."

"That will not do, I say again. Lewis Jordan and his committee were in my church six weeks ago. And —"

"Man, man ! it's nae 'arts' to go to church on the Sabbath day. That's Scripture. 'Forsake not the assemblin' o' yourselves thegither,' says Scripture."

"Mr. Henderson, this is too bad. You only evada. Lewis Jordan and his committee heard me preach, and they came home to you and reported they had found a man, and the church said bring him here and let us hear him. He deceived me. And you knew it all and never told me."

"An' how could I tell ye ? The voice o' the congregation said let him come, an' who was I to oppose ? Doesna the Scripture say, 'the voice o' the people is the voice o' God' ? "

"No, the Scripture does not say that. But I give you up. You are incorrigible."

When the evening service ended, to my surprise the people came down the aisles to shake hands with the preacher. As many as fifty spoke most kindly and thanked me for the messages of the day. Major Ardman introduced them by name, and gave me a most delightful feeling of having one good strong friend. Lewis Jordan did not appear. The Major and Henderson walked with me down to the Hender-

I LEARN MORE ABOUT LEWIS JORDAN 209

son home. It was the Scotchman who spoke. "It's a peety, lad, you don't know mair doctrine an' less science. It's a peety ye ha'ena mair releegion an' less activity. Ye were nigh bein' a pounder the night, forbye bein' expounder."

"David, that's too bad. That was a fine sermon to-night."

"Aye, Geordie, I know. But doesna the Scripture say, 'Woe unto ye when a' men speak well o' ye'? An' a' were speakin' well the night. I wad keep the woe awa'." I laughed. I could not help it. He was droll. But I answered, "Mr. Henderson, I'd like mighty well to know just all you mean and all you don't mean by your badinage. But I'm weary, too weary to discuss. The strange surroundings, the big church, the throng of people, and Jordan's trick have been too much for me."

"All right, man," he answered, "ye shall go to bed directly."

But that privilege was denied me. The tramp of feet behind made me aware that people were following. They turned in at Henderson's gate, after us. There were seven of them, Lewis Jordan being one of the number. They followed us into the house. That meant that I must be kept up for some time still, and I said to myself if the occasion comes I will get some satisfaction out of Mr. Lewis Jordan for the part he has had in this business.

He himself furnished the opportunity. Taking a seat by me, after a few minutes of general conversation, he said, "I suppose you are aware why we are here."

"Probably to juggle with me some more," I said with some feeling.

He looked surprised, as did the rest of the company. "I do not quite understand," he said.

"You should," I replied. "When I caught your eye in the service this morning, when my sermon came to an abrupt stop for a brief interval, I had just recognized you as a man who had been in my church one Sunday six weeks ago, and you saw that I had recognized you."

"Well, yes, I confess. I was in your church. But is going to your church juggling with you?"

"Your correspondence contained the juggling. You have brought me here because the congregation wanted to hear me before they acted on your report. You gave me to understand a committee would be out to-day hunting a preacher. No committee has been out to-day."

"Jordan, he has you caught," said a man.

"Yes, caught," I replied. "He laid the trap, played the trick, took me in, deceived me. The only satisfaction I have is in being able to tell him how completely I understand the game."

"Now, my dear sir," Jordan began, "you mustn't be too hard on us. Perhaps I did not do right, but our pulpit has been vacant for a year, and the committee thought it had found the man we wanted, and we were sure the congregation would be pleased to hear you. But about telling the people and about their asking to hear you, well, allow that that's so. We told the people you weren't coming as a candidate, that you'd refused to be a candidate, and neither you nor they were prejudiced." I interrupted him before he could go further.

"Mr. Jordan, you have relieved the situation in a measure. But had you written to me frankly, 'a com-

I LEARN MORE ABOUL LEWIS JORDAN 211

mittee from our church has heard you preach, and will report to the congregation in favor of calling you, and ——”

“That’s it, that’s it,” he said: “that’s just it; and now, if we will make out a call for you as our pastor, will you accept it? That is what we are here to learn.”

In that moment the lawyer thought he had turned the tables on me. For the instant I was nonplussed. Then I began to think. To say “yes” would be to give myself utterly away. To say “no” meant the end of the whole episode, and for that I was not ready. The room was very quiet. All at once a voice said, “Silence gives consent.” That brought the critical moment, and the words rushed past my lips, “Oh, no, no, no, no, I consent to nothing.”

“Man, Dominie!” that of course was Henderson. “D’ ye mean to say ye willna consent to consider a ca’?”

“I do not mean to say I will consent to consider, and I do not mean to say I will not,” I answered.

Once more Mr. Jordan spoke. “My dear sir,” he said, “there were large congregations in church this morning and to-night, and the voice is well-nigh unanimous. ‘That man is the preacher that we want,’ they say. Mr. Henderson went about saying you had not religion enough, but we all know that was his way of hastening people to decide. So once more I ask you the frank question for us all here, will you accept a call if we make one?”

Driven to bay, I answered doggedly and with a feeling that the answer would end the whole matter at once:

“Well, make it and find out.”

"What do you mean by that?" asked Mr. Jordan, as before.

"I mean what the words mean. It isn't fair for you to ask me, a stranger, to commit myself that I will or will not accept a call, when you commit yourselves to nothing. You promise me here that you'll make me a call to become pastor of this church, and I'll promise to answer before I go home whether or not I'll accept."

Jordan replied, as I expected he would, "Well, but we cannot promise what the congregation will do, for we don't know."

"Good!" said I. "I cannot promise that I will accept your call or refuse it, for I don't know. I haven't heard from myself yet."

The little company evidently considered that final. One by one they rose, said courteous things in saying good-night, and departed. When the last one had gone, Henderson looked at me a moment, and then burst into a great laugh. "Ye floored him, I doot, that Jordan. He came back frae Greenton and said ye were easy; said he'd get ye here and commit ye wi'out committin' the congregation; said Greenton was only a country place and ye'd run to come." And he laughed again a hearty laugh. All at once his mood changed. "Come wi' me," he said. He led the way to his own office, and, giving me a cigar, said, "Sit doon, lad, smoke that, then go to bed. I don't know who's the bigger idiot, yoursel' or Jordan."

While I smoked, thought was busy. The manipulation of the recent events in my life was the work of this man, who grew more and more dear to me, but whose ways were like those of "The Heathen Chinee." Matters took form in my mind directly, and to act at

I LEARN MORE ABOUT LEWIS JORDAN 213

once seemed wisest. Henderson was writing. "May I interrupt you?" I said.

He laid down his pen. "I am all attention, my friend. What is it?"

"What is the difference, Mr. Henderson, between indirection and deception?"

"Ye ask me as a theologian, I doot?"

"No, I ask for myself as a plain common-sense man, and I do not ask you as a lawyer, but as the same sort of a man."

"An' what wad be makin' ye ask such a question?"

"The fact that I have suffered from indirection, and the belief that I have been deceived."

"That's what I'll be tellin' Jordan when my time comes. Jordan put his foot in it, ye ken."

"I was not thinking of Lewis Jordan," I said.

"Ye wasna? Was ye thinkin' o' Wendell? Has he ever deceived ye?"

"Never. He is as direct and straight and true as a sunbeam. I was thinking of you, Mr. Henderson."

"Now hear him! O' me? An' ye wad be sayin' that I was indirect, I doot?"

"Yes, that was my thought."

"Me indirect? Do I luik like a man who would be indirect, when straight-ahead directness would serve him better?"

"No, but that never seems to serve you better. It was all well enough to invite me to be your guest. It did no harm to say you were in Saratoga on business. The business was to come after me. That harmed no one. But you knew all about this Jordan business. You knew the committee had visited Greenton. You knew your whole purpose was to get me before

your congregation. You worked by indirectness all through, and you deceived me. Did you not?"

"Man, it depends upon the point o' view. I didna know what Jordan wrote to ye. I didna know what you wrote to Jordan. I was knowin' that ye was sensitive and stubborn. An' I know Jordan was no angler. So I told him aboot the bumblebee and darning-needle, but I think he must hae cast wi' worms for bait."

"There you are again," I said. "Indirect once more. You put up that whole job, Mr. Henderson."

"Put up the job? Wad ye ca' me a carpenter? I did naethin'. I said, 'Jordan, I won't interfere wi' your work. But I know a man who can preach, but ye canna get him. There'll be nae use goin' to hear him. Ye canna get him.' When he asked me who the man was, I telt him, o' course. But I said, 'Don't go there, ye canna get him.' An' he surprised me when he telt me ye was comin'."

To laugh was all that was left to me. He had beaten me off from ground of my own choosing, and that too by the same indirection.

"Ye laugh, man! Ye do na weel. I'm yer friend."

"Yes, I know you are; you've proved that. But there's one consolation: Jordan will drop me. He'll tell the people I'm a crank, and that he's changed his mind."

"Maybe, maybe, but I'll tell every one how ye routed Jordan; an' I'll say Jordan's advice to drop ye is good, for it'll save us a' from mortification, because ye resent Jordan so, ye wadna accept if we ca'd ye. See?"

And I saw that the Scotchman was hopeless, and I went to bed.

XVIII

RED HEADLINES

HARRY SINCLAIR'S invitation to spend Wednesday with him was most welcome. Henderson wanted me to lead the midweek prayer-meeting, but to face the congregation seemed impossible after the Jordan episode. Henderson was in his house office when I returned next morning, and sent for me. He was direct enough now. "People were disappointed no to see ye the night. I telt them that ye was awa' with the Henry the Eighth Papist."

"What people?" I asked. "Not to see me where?"

"Oh, hush, man, wi' your questions! Ye ken what people, an' where. Our church people, of course, an' at prayer-meetin'. The place was packed."

"It'll do them good to want what they can't get," was my reply. I was feeling a little independent, as the result of the day with Harry.

"There's a letter for ye. It's from Grandview, from the blasphemer, I doot." It was Joe's reply to my letter saying I would be at the Balustrade, and ran thus:

"DEAR OLD BOY:

"Go to the Balustrade. That's all right. But we'll have you at the house for a meal or two.

"I wrote Elder Harfis you would be here, and he telegraphed that he would come down. We'll have a grand time. I suppose you will want to go to some church in the morning, but you must come to the mission in the afternoon and talk to my flock. Then say, old chap, I'll show you the loveliest girl on the globe.

You've just got to get married. Helen says the Greenton people are talking about it. They want a pastor's wife. Helen says our girl is just the one for you and for Greenton. She's one of the teachers in the mission. She don't care for men. Helen never dares to talk with her about men in the husband way. She tried once, but our girl said, 'Please don't talk about men to me, Mrs. Smith. It will spoil our friendship. There is too much else to talk about that is worth while.' Helen says she's in love with some one now, but I don't believe it. When you get here, go in and win her.

"Well, good-bye. I'll look for you Saturday night.
"Ever in the Old Bonds,
"JOE."

That letter made me laugh aloud, and the noise roused Henderson, who looked up from his desk to ask, "What are ye laughin' at? Is your letter funny?"

I tossed it over to him, saying, "The letter is not as funny as you men. Each of you is going to marry me to a girl he knows. Sinclair has a girl to whom he means to have me married. The girl about whom you talk so much is probably a creation of your fancy. Now, old Joe has a girl, and he wants to marry me to her. I might as well move to Utah."

Henderson had read the letter by this time. With one of his Scotch sniffs, he said :

"Joe Smith canna palm off any city mission girls on ye. When I get ready, I've got the girl for ye."

"Ready, Mr. Henderson," I broke in, "ready? I'm getting old. How many more years do you want for getting ready?"

"Oh, hoot, man! Ye're only a youngster," he said. "Ye don't know enough to get married. But ye shall have that girl, an' she shall have you. Did ye ever

know a Scotchman to make up his mind to anything an' miss? Do I luik like a man that misses what he's sure he has in his hand?"

That day was the last of my delightful stay in Duqueboro. Julia Henderson was ready to start on the morrow for her visit to Miss Alcorn. The evening was the most memorable of the whole week. The Presbyterian Social Union met, and Henderson had Harry Sinclair and me as his guests. Henderson was the last of three scheduled speakers after a very fine banquet had been enjoyed. None of the addresses were of particular account, but as Henderson, whose subject was "Our Pastor," closed he said, "I have wi' me as guests, the night, two specimens of our pastor. One is Dr. Sinclair. Ye ken him weel, as both boy among ye lang syne, and man now. I'll no be callin' on him for a speech. But ma ither guest has a story to tell which is worth while, an' I think, Mr. President, ye wad honor yersel' by ca'in' on him."

Of course, the president asked me to speak. There was no escape. I rose, told the "no benediction" story, all that led to it, including Henderson's cold bath, all that followed, and, after it, thanked them for a very pleasant evening. As the company was dispersing several gentlemen spoke with me, asking questions about the revival. Presently Henderson approached. "It's an early start ye must make, man. I wad be havin' ye to bed. Good-night, gentlemen," and he hurried me away.

The Pullman car was full. Julia and I were hardly in our seats when Felix Ardman appeared. It did not seem that the girl was surprised when he announced

a business trip would take him one hundred miles east. To surrender my chair to him was the work of a moment. It gave me the opportunity to sit in the comfortable compartment for smokers, where undisturbed it would be possible to think over the past delightful days.

There were two commercial travelers in the compartment, and no other passengers; but they were in somewhat noisy and hilarious conversation. Not to overhear them was impossible, although the presence of a stranger quieted them a little. They were discussing the morning paper, and recollection came to me that a copy had not been at my place at breakfast, as on every preceding morning.

"Yes," one said to the other, "old Davie made it red-hot. He couldn't boss the last preacher they had, and he took it out on the whole profession last night."

"Pity some of them couldn't have been there to hear," was the reply.

"Oh, there were two there," resumed the first speaker. "Old Davie had with him a preacher guest from the East somewhere, and Dr. Sinclair, 'of The Redeemer,' too."

"Yes, I read so much in the *Clarion*. But they don't count. The stranger wouldn't catch on at all, and Dr. Sinclair's another sort. It's the whole stupid old preacher gang that should have been there."

"I'm not so sure about the stranger's not taking it," was the answer. "They say he's quick-witted. Folks around town are talking about how he doubled up Squire Jordan last Sunday night. Anyway, Kir Jear Church will call him for its pastor, and old Davie was dosing him in that speech. He means to run him when he comes here to live."

"How do you know so much?" said the second man.

"Oh, Ardman told me. You know Felix, don't you?"

"Yes. But say! Felix has struck ten. Did you know it?"

"Struck ten? How?"

"Why, he's going to marry old Davie's daughter. That's money, you know."

"Yes, I expect she's the handsomest girl, if you measure beauty by bank account, that there is in Duqueboro."

"Yes, that's so. Felix 'll have a million by and by, and I'm glad. He's pretty good—a little stiff, but he's a good railroader."

"Did you hear about the speech the eastern preacher made after old Davie had finished? The paper says it was a corker."

I did not wait to hear the answer, but started through the train to find a newsboy. Having secured a copy of the Duqueboro *Clarion*, and returned to the compartment, there fell upon my astonished gaze a description of the events of the last night. Display headlines, printed in big red letters, extending across the page and arranged with eye-catching skill, announced

THE FAMOUS "NO BENEDICTION" DOMINIE MAKES A BID FOR OUR RICHEST CITY PULPIT.

MILLIONAIRE DAVID HENDERSON INTRODUCES HIM.

HE TELLS A THRILLING STORY OF HOW HE SAVES SOULS.

TELLS HOW OLD DAVIE, THE CORPORATION LAWYER, FELL INTO THE GREEENTON RIVER.

TELLS HOW AN EX-BUMMER BUSTED A TAVERN BAR.

Not to read was impossible. Not to become angry and grow red in the face was equally impossible. Fascination and exasperation were in those lines. This was my first experience with the guild reportorial. My face, of course, betrayed me.

"Duqueboro papers do it up brown, don't they?" said the man who had been doing most of the talking.

To which I made answer, "They seem to do it up red. I know now how skinned eels feel."

"Why, how's that?" asked the second man. "You don't look skinned. Your face is that red, you look more like a lobster."

At that we all laughed. "All right," I said. "You're a commercial man, and I suppose you think you belong to a privileged class, and until you say something worse than you have, I'll not complain. But I tell you, boys, I've enough to make any man's face red. I'm the preacher that those red headlines roast so."

"You don't say?" said the first man. He rose and put out his hand. "Shake, Dominie, shake. I'm glad to see a preacher that can get red headlines from the *Clarion*. There isn't one in a hundred of 'em that can."

"Well, I don't like it," I resumed. "I'll be ashamed to go back into Duqueboro, if I'm ever asked to go back. What do you suppose those church folks will think? I don't want their pulpit, and I didn't make any bid for it. That layout there is outrageous."

"Oh, no, it ain't," said the second man. "That's just high newspaper art. No one'll remember it a week. The reporters will have more hot stuff to-morrow or next day. Everybody will forget you. Folks haven't time to waste remembering all the papers say, leastways about country ministers."

"You don't seem to have a high opinion of country ministers," I said.

"Well, no; they ain't no great shakes," was the response. "But the country has to have 'em, I suppose."

"Where do you think the city ministers come from?"

"Oh, that's all right. The smart country ones bid for the big city pulpits when they get a chance, just as you did."

"But I told you I didn't bid for that pulpit," I said in great heat.

"That's the way they all talk," he replied, and added, "What a lot of liars newspaper reporters must be."

"Well, the newspaper man who wrote those headlines was a liar. And the off-hand way in which you class me in with the pulpit-hunters makes me think of another drummer I used to know."

"Who was he?"

"Joe Smith, a Boston man."

"What! Joe Smith, of Murdoch, Stiles and Harris?"

"Yes, he's the man."

Then this second man jumped up, thrusting out his hand. "Shake, partner," he said, "shake. Proud to know anyone that knew Joe. Poor old chap, he isn't dead, but he's buried."

"Not much," I answered. "He's above ground all right, and he's the liveliest man I know. He's preaching and superintending a mission in Grandview, New York. And if you ever get a chance, you go hear him preach. He'll open your eyes. Where did you know him?"

"Oh, on the road and in Boston. I took his place in Murdoch's concern when Joe quit."

"You did? Well, I'm going to see Joe to-morrow night."

"That so? You tell him you saw Pete Dunn, and tell him I say he's buried."

"All right. And when you go into Boston, you tell Mr. Harris you saw me on the road."

"Do you know Harris?"

"Yes. He is my cousin. We traveled over Europe and the Holy Land together."

"Great Scott!" he said. "What a little world this is." And with that the conversation ended, and I turned to the paper. What a fabrication it was. I read with a mingled feeling of wrath and mirth:

"The Presbyterian Social Union had a big time last night. The meeting was ostensibly to hear three addresses, after the regular banquet of the Union. The real purpose, however, was to hear the new sensation discovered in the East by Mr. David Henderson, the well-known corporation lawyer, the leading elder in the Kir Jear Presbyterian Church, and the boss of things generally in Presbyterian circles in this city. Mr. Henderson's find is popularly known in the East as the 'No Benediction' preacher. The way it came about:

"Mr. Henderson happened to be in the city where this 'no benediction' preacher resides, on the Sunday when he sprung his great sensation. Since then, the preacher has been traveling about, making the speech he made last night. Report says it has been to him the source of an income not to be laughed at. The *Clarion* was unable to verify the report that he was paid one hundred dollars by the officers of the Union.

His story of old Davie up to his neck in the water, fighting with a trout, was as dramatic as anything to be heard in the histrionic world. Of course no one believes the story. No one ever heard of catching a trout with a bumblebee and a darning-needle. That was one of the facts that belong to the realm of the imagination. But preachers, as we know them, are fond of telling good stories, and when they have heard one or invented one, the road to believing it to be true, and to telling it as true, is not long. It is the business of preachers to believe things.

"Guests at the Union enjoyed it all immensely, and only a few knew that the 'no benediction' man's address was a put-up job. Almost all thought it impromptu. Our reporters caught the preacher as he was going out of the foyer of the Duqueboro Club, but he was not in the mood to be interviewed. Mr. Henderson whipped him off, for fear, probably, that he would say something true that could be printed.

"Mr. Henderson's own speech was not slow. He gave all the preachers a good round-up, and his own guest came in for a share. Mr. Henderson never spoils a story for relation's sake.

"Altogether, the Presbyterians had a night they will not soon forget. The two real speeches were not what you hear on the vaudeville stage, but they were not far off. The other two speeches were of no importance. There is talk, it has been learned, of calling this preacher to the vacant pulpit of the Kir Jear Church. If it be true, and he accept the call, Duqueboro will not be without her sensations."

After that bit of reportorial literature had been read through three times, it was cut, headlines and all, from the paper, and consigned to my letter-case.

We were almost down the grade on the eastern side of the mountains. It was time to return to Julia and Felix. To break in upon their tête-à-tête was not pleasant, but there was no alternative. The train came to a halt at the foot of the mountains, and Felix very reluctantly said good-bye.

* * * * *

Miss Julia Henderson and her escort did not reach Grandview until seven o'clock on Saturday night. It was a clear, cold December night, and there was good sleighing, though it was yet only early winter. My spirits were high. In a few moments my last duty to my friend's daughter would have been performed, and after that what comfort there would be for old Joe and me at the Balustrade. I found a sleigh, told the driver where to go, and we were away.

The driver placed Julia's luggage on the porch and rang the bell. I helped her to alight and walked with her to the door, expecting to return presently to be driven to the Balustrade. I did not see who opened the door, having turned to gather up the light luggage. But I knew from the demonstrations I heard that Julia had rushed into her friend's arms. I was still busy loading myself with valises and magazines and a box of flowers, when a voice struck my ear that for a second stopped the beating of my heart and sent a thrill through every fibre of my being. What was this? Where was I? Was this some feverish dream? Would I wake presently and find myself in Greenton, and know that Duqueboro was only a figment of a weary brain?

"Julia dear," the voice said, "you are keeping the gentleman out in the cold."

"Why, so I am," she cried. "How stupid of me!" and she hastened on into the hallway.

Then I turned like a soldier at the word of command. There stood the maid of honor.

There was no escape for me. Henderson had trapped me. We faced each other as statues do, motionless, neither giving a sign for a full minute. Neither spoke. Without flinching we looked each other squarely in the eyes. Though my exterior was calm, my soul was in a tumult. Julia's luggage was in my hands still, held awkwardly enough too. What new game fate was about to play with me was not yet revealed. But I knew where I was, and as to that girl there could be no mistake. Marble is not whiter than was her face. Plainly she was greatly moved. Three thoughts went chasing each other through my mind. How beautiful she is! How I love her! How she hates me! Suddenly Julia recollected that I had not been introduced. Turning to me she said, "You will pardon me, I doubt, as my father would say." Then addressing her friend, "Let me present my escort from Duqueboro, Mr. Haynes." At that the maid of honor, her manner absolutely unruffled, said, "I wondered that you did not present your escort. Please come in, the night is cold."

Standing as rigid as will and anger could make me, I said, "Miss Henderson, this is not Miss Alcorn; this is Miss Alice Leavenworth. Why have you deceived me so?" And then to that peerless other girl, "I told you it would be by accident if we ever met again, and this is the most unseemly accident and the worst blunder of all."

"We will let accidents and blunders go for to-night, Mr. Haynes," Miss Leavenworth said.

"Come in: we are keeping the door open, and the air is frosty."

"Yes, it is frosty, very frosty," I said. "I will close the door, but only to say good-night after a moment. May I have brief privilege of speech? Had I known where I was coming to-night, and that you lived in Grandview, I would never have been at this door. The name Alcorn misled me." Again to Julia Henderson I said, "Miss Henderson, I repeat my question. Why have you deceived me so?"

"But she is Miss Alcorn," said Julia. "She is Alice Alcorn Leavenworth, and my father said we must call her Miss Alcorn to you, and he would not tell me why."

"But I know why," I answered. "I know bitterly why." Then addressing myself once more to the maid of honor I said, "I supposed that you lived in Newark. That belief came from the entry in the guest-book in the Castle of Indolence. You will pardon me, I am sure, for being here unasked and undesired. My sleigh is at the door, and I will keep my *Westernland* promise. Good-night, Miss Leavenworth. Good-night, Miss Henderson, and good-bye."

And at that juncture a voice sounded through the hall, "What's that I hear? Good-night without giving a fellow a chance to shake your hand and to say how glad we are to return in some measure the kindness you showed us in the big rain-storm? No, no, that won't do." The voice was that of the brother who had been with Tim and me on the way in to Indian Lake, and also my fellow-passenger on *The Westernland*. He came down the hall and took my hand in a way that left no doubt of his cordiality.

Then his sister said, "Dick, I was just about to tell

Mr. Haynes that mother would never forgive me if I allowed him to go away without accepting our hospitality." Turning to me she said, "We have waited dinner for Julia and you." Then she spoke once more to her brother, "Here, Dick, take charge of Mr. Haynes. He needs refreshing after his long journey. Dinner will be ready when you come down. Come, Julia." When at last we had gathered for dinner the maid of honor presented me to her mother and to her brother's only boy, Willie. "All that we are you see," she said. "One whom you saw on the Adirondack drive has gone home."

I shall never forget the way in which the mother bowed, and then advancing took my hand. She was a lady of the old school, and made me feel that her home was mine while I was in it. A glance was sufficient to see the source from which the daughter derived her marvelous beauty. At dinner Julia made one or two attempts to explain the Alcorn game that she and her father had played, but the maid of honor was alert, and with rare tact kept Julia from entangling herself in the toils of falsehood. She did manage to express great surprise that Miss Leavenworth and I had met on any other occasion than that of St. David's, but she had not the skill of her father. He could dodge absolute falsehood with wonderful adroitness, but Julia would have been wrecked but for the maid of honor. As soon as dinner was over, and conventionality would allow, I excused myself.

"Shall I see you again?" asked Julia, as I was making my adieu.

"No, Miss Henderson," I answered. "I'm going to Mr. Smith's mission in the afternoon, and shall spend

the rest of the day with him. Early Monday morning I start for Greenton. You'll not miss me."

But Mrs. Leavenworth had another little attention to bestow on her chance guest. The dear old lady did not in the least know that every moment I was spending there was torture.

"What? You are not coming to see us to-morrow?" she said. "You are a stranger in Grandview. I wish you would come in to-morrow night and see the lovely view from our river-front veranda. The moon will be full to-morrow night. Come and let Richard show you the fine outlook."

So I accepted. But I said in an aside to Miss Leavenworth, who had offered me her hand, "I have not forgotten and I will not forget my promise on *The Westernland*. I will keep that."

"It is a good thing to keep one's promises, as a rule, I suppose," she answered.

As I went out, I met Bruce Fraser going in. The night was bright.

"You here?" he said. "How did you get here?"

"By the train and a sleigh," I answered. His breath was strong of liquor.

XIX

TOM

AS I registered at the Balustrade the clerk said, "Mr. Smith called for you an hour ago. He left a letter." It ran:

"I waited to see you as long as I could, but I'll see you to-morrow. Don't fail to go to the First Church in the morning. There's a new pastor there, and he's worth hearing. Be sure to come to the mission in the afternoon, and go home with us to dinner. I will show you the best mission work in a small city you ever heard of, and the handsomest woman in America. You can't afford to miss either. JOE."

Of course I knew who that woman was. In the quiet of my room I pondered the varied experiences of the past most eventful week. Henderson's whole scheme was as plain as daylight. He had intended to bring me face to face with the girl of whom he had talked so mysteriously, and had succeeded. Moreover he had known all the time that my girl and his were identical, for that Julia should not know where her friend had been maid of honor, and who had been best man, was unthinkable. The Duqueboro visit and the preaching had been only by-play for his real game. He had overmatched me by indirection once more, and the game was on. There were surely three players in it. I was one; Bruce Fraser was another; the girl was the third. Fraser evidently "had the man of me," as the checker players say.

Joe was delightfully ignorant of the whole plot that Henderson had laid, but he had unwittingly placed me where it was my move, and the spirit of play and the determination to win took form for the first time.

Plainly enough the girl had not changed. She had been polite because in her own home, but she had given not the slightest intimation that approach toward her would be tolerated. Her real attitude toward me evidently had not changed since St. David's. But could I allow that beer-drinking Bruce to win her without an effort? No, no, no. And yet what to do I did not know.

Sunday dawned crisp, clear, and cold. My first thought was of the relief that one day free from preaching would bring. To go to church and hear a sermon would be a comfort. To sit where the maid of honor could be seen, and have no one to say me nay, would be a delight; then a second thought forced itself into consciousness: suppose she should not be in church to-day; or suppose she attends some other church? Finally, "Be honest with yourself," said conscience. "You're not going to church to hear a sermon; you're going hoping to see that girl." "You hold your peace," I answered to the uncomfortable monitor. "What do you know about my reasons for going to church?" Nevertheless, I asked the sexton, when I reached the First Church, if the Leavenworth family attended there, and not until he made an affirmative answer did I enter. He followed me with the inquiry, "Shall I show you to their pew, sir?"

"No," I answered. "But will you tell me upon which aisle they sit?" He pointed to the aisle, and on it, by the door, in the back pew, I seated myself. From that vantage point every person who should

enter could be plainly seen. But it was of no avail. The maid of honor did not come; only "Brother Dick" and the boy Willie, who spied me and told his father, whereupon the latter stepped back and asked me to be his guest.

"Thank you," I answered, "but I fear that would crowd you uncomfortably. You have one guest already."

"Oh, no," he replied, "mother and the girls will not be here to-day. There will be plenty of room." So into the Leavenworth pew I went, and took a little consolation in thinking I was sitting probably where she often sat.

But my thoughts were presently turned into another channel. When the preacher entered his pulpit, to my utter amazement he was the preacher of the Paoli monument conversation, the Rev. Chalfant Fraser. To turn to Mr. Richard and ask "Is this your pastor?" was the work of an instant, and as he assured me he was, a whole troop of memories went flitting across the field of consciousness. Just then Mr. Fraser recognized me, and, coming down from his pulpit, asked me to a seat beside him and to make the "long prayer."

Why Bruce Fraser was in Grandview was now evident enough, and, if the truth must be told, he occupied more of my attention than did his father's sermon.

"Old boy, what are you mooning about?" Joe had been piloting Elder Harfis and me about his mission building, and probably had expected much more enthusiasm in me than he found. My answer was wide of the question. "Does Bruce Fraser live here?"

"Bruce Fraser? What in creation has he to do with my mission house?"

"Well, nothing, I hope. But does he live here?"

"No, he don't. He lives in Newark. He's up here every week. What do you know about him?"

"He rode into the Adirondacks once with Wendell and me, and there came up an awful thunder-shower and soaked all three of us to the skin."

"Oh, I see. I suppose you heard Dr. Fraser preach this morning? Do you want to see Bruce?"

"No, not particularly. I did hear Dr. Fraser this morning, and I thought perhaps Bruce was his son and might live here."

"Yes, he's Dr. Fraser's son. He's in town to-day, I think. When I was waiting in the Balustrade for you last night, he came in and went to the bar. I hear he goes there too often."

"Do you know anything about his home? Does his wife live here or in Newark?" I felt guilty when I said that. I was playing old Joe, and he a fraternity brother.

"Wife? He hasn't any wife. He's after one here, I'm afraid. He's hanging around that girl I've been writing to you about. I wish he'd keep away. He's a bad egg. You see, I know the game. I've played it myself, but I never mixed a good girl into it. I've had a notion to tell that girl what he is, but Helen says I'd better keep still."

Just at that moment a bell sounded. "That is for the various departments to assemble," said Joe. "Come on."

He led the way to what was evidently the main mission room, and asked me to a seat with him on the platform. There were gathered seven hundred chil-

dren and youth and adults. The sight was fine, and to me new. As Joe took his place, every one rose. "Good-afternoon, my dear people, young and old," he said, and a great response returned, "Good-afternoon, Mr. Smith." During the opening exercises, my gaze was roving about the room, but the girl I sought was not there. When the lesson period came, Joe said:

"My girl, of whom I have written and bragged, isn't here to-day, though she expected to be, when I saw her yesterday. There must be something unusual the matter. But will you take her class?"

To assent was only the part of brotherly kindness, but the experience of the hour that followed was wholly unique, and its consequences could by no possibility be foreseen.

There were six boys in the class. Five were fairly well dressed and better-looking than the average mission school boy of ten or eleven years. The sixth boy was one of the impossibles. He was fully sixteen years old. He was large, awkward, overgrown, poorly dressed. His hands and face were far from clean, and his hair was uncombed. His whole appearance was repugnant.

Even while I was wondering at the queer make-up of this class, one of the boys spoke.

"Say, boss, put him out," pointing to the older lad. "He don't belong here."

"Where does he belong?" I asked.

"We don't know," chorused the whole five. "We ain't never seen him before."

"Well, where shall I put him, boys?"

"Aw, we don't care. Put him out o' here."

"But, boys, I'm a stranger here. I wouldn't like to make a rumpus like that."

"Get Mr. Smith ter take him away, then," they urged.

All this time the big boy sat perfectly still, apparently paying no heed to the talk.

"Before I ask Mr. Smith to take him away, let's find out who he is," I suggested. To this they agreed, and little by little I dug out the following information, while the five boys gradually became interested and leaned forward to listen.

"Name's Tom. No, nuthin' but Tom—Tom's name enough fer me.

"How old I be? I'm eighteen year old.

"My father? Ain't got no father. Hed one once.

"Yes, my father's dead. Killed in th' factory.

"Yes, I work in th' factory.

"Got six sisters an' two brothers.

"Yes, two o' th' gals works in th' factory.

"Hard ter git along? You bet!

"No, never bin ter school. C'n read easy words a little. Mother larned me.

"No, never bin ter Sunday-school.

"Dunno why I come in here. Was tired; folks looked nice; wanted ter set down, so I come in.

"Yes, know God made me. Dunno why. Didn' do me no good, makin' me. Made ever'body, s'pose He hed ter make me.

"Know Jesus died fer me? No; wha'd He do thet fer?

"Hain't saved me none. Hain't saved none o' us none.

"Whose class this is? Didn' know 'twas a class. Was tired; come in here; sot down."

By the time I had pumped all this from Tom by

hint of patient questioning, the lesson time was gone. The other boys had watched and listened with all their eyes and ears.

"Boys, shall I put him out?" I asked of them finally.

"Naw—don't put him out. Let him stay. Let the teacher say what she'll do, next Sunday," said one boy. "She likes freaks, an' this bloke's a big one." Then another boy reached over and asked, "Say, 'll yer come next Sunday?"

"Dunno," was the answer.

When the session was over, I asked Joe and Mr. Harfis to excuse me for an hour. Something impelled me to learn more of that boy's life. Hurrying out after him, I slipped my arm through his, and asked him to take me home with him to see his mother. He made no response. No attempt to draw him into conversation succeeded. He would make answer only in short phrases. His speech was slow; so was his gait, though the December afternoon was cold, and his clothes were thin and ragged. His shoes were coarse and broken, and he wore no stockings. He said he owned no Bible. He owned nothing: how could he? All his slender earnings went to help keep the wolf from his mother's door. Even his hearing seemed dull. In my soul the question would keep rising, "Lord Jesus, is this one of those for whom Thou hast died? Has this man a soul?"

A mile or more to Tom's home was traversed at last. Down by the river, in a squalid place, stood the house, or rather hovel. In such a locality, in the summer, swine would lie in the gutters and pools of stagnant water; goats would browse upon the weeds at the door; geese would hiss at the passers. Now

the snow was defiled of all purity. Heaps of filth marked the course of the highway, and rendered the approaches to the place almost intolerable.

The hut consisted of a single story, and contained three rooms. One was kitchen, store-room, and family living-room combined, serving also as Tom's bedroom at night, while into the other wretched apartments were crowded the mother and her eight children.

My talk with the woman gave me a new view of life. She was of a poor type, like the hovel where she lived. Every morning, winter and summer, the boy and his two sisters were up and away by six o'clock, to the long hours and heated, unhealthy air of the great cotton-mill, a mile away. At night, they would trudge home to the wretched fare which their scanty earnings and their improvident mother could procure. It was probable that, since Tom could remember, he had never known what it was not to be hungry.

The house was in great need of repairs. The door-sill had rotted away; the door hung by the top hinge only; the chimney-top was broken, and the chimney crumbling down; the glass was broken in many panes, and the holes filled with bits of rag and scraps of paper. To see it made me sick at heart. Some one was being paid for the rent of that place, and the coin was made out of the blood and brawn of that poor boy.

Not until I had persuaded both mother and boy to promise that he would return to the mission school next Sabbath, did I turn my steps toward Joe Smith's home. The clock on the mantel in his parlor showed five-thirty, and there were some expostulations over my conduct, though, when the tale of my afternoon was told, they all forgave me.

"I'll look out for that boy next week," said Joe, "and put him where he belongs."

"Joe," and I reached half across the table in my earnestness, "don't you move that boy until I say you may. I don't know his teacher, but if she has such beauty of heart and soul as you say she has of face, she'll keep that poor Tom, and she'll make something of him. He's my find, Joe, and I'm going to know more of him, by and by."

"Well," my friend exclaimed, "of all the idiotic speeches! You don't know his teacher, and you'll never see her, probably, unless I can get you down here again. And you're going home on the first train to-morrow. How will you ever know more about that boy?"

"Why, through you, of course," I answered. "I've added a family to your calling list."

XX

JULIA BECOMES MY CHAMPION

JULIA and the maid of honor had not gone out that day. Julia was too weary from her long journey, and courtesy kept her hostess at home with her friend. They were sitting together pretending to read, when Julia said, "Alice, who was that man here last night?"

"You ought to know," was the reply. "You brought him here."

"Oh, I never! He did not come on account of me."

"Perhaps not, but he came with you."

"Whom are you talking about?"

"Your escort from home: that young minister. You know well enough."

"Oh, I don't mean him. Of course I know who he is. He's daddy's pet. But I'm talking about that Fraser man. Who is he?"

"Why, you have just said who he is—'that Fraser man.'"

"Alice, what ails you? You're perverse. Are you in love with him?"

"In love with whom? Your escort? If I were, I'd never tell him nor you."

"Oh, bother the escort. Let him rest. But he has some sense. He left Felix and me together in the parlor car, and gave Felix his seat because there was no other. But the Fraser man—are you going to marry the Fraser man?"

"How do I know? He has never asked me."

"Does he come here every week?"

"Yes, when he does not go somewhere else."

"How long have you known him? He's a handsome fellow. He's taller than Felix. But I didn't like him last night."

"Why didn't you like him?"

"I didn't like his airs. He had a sort of swagger, as if he was thinking 'I'd have people understand that I am at home in this house.'"

"Well, why shouldn't he? We all make him very much at home. He's brother Dick's manager in Newark."

"Have you known him long?"

"What a lot of questions you ask. You give me no chance to answer. I've known him four or five years."

"Did you know him when we were at Dow's Crossing?"

"Yes." There was a pause for a few minutes. Each girl studied her book, but each was preparing to renew the skirmish over the men of the night before. Julia led off once more. "Where does he live?"

"In Greenton."

"What! do they both live in Greenton?"

"Both who? What's the matter with you, Julia?"

"There's nothing the matter with me, but I believe there is with you. I believe you're in love with that Greenton preacher. You seem to think I'm asking about him all the time. I tell you, Alice, I'm not talking about the preacher. I'm talking about the Fraser man. Where does he live?"

"Oh, he lives here, or in Newark. His father is

pastor of our church, and Bruce comes up every Saturday night from Newark. Before Dick's wife died they lived in Newark, and Bruce was a clerk in his store. When Dick and I went abroad, he left Bruce in charge of the Newark store. And now Dick has moved up here and made Bruce manager."

"Well, I don't like him."

"And I do. He's good times. You'll see. He knows how to laugh. That Greenton preacher doesn't look as though he could laugh."

"Oh, he can laugh, Alice. He's a splendid story-teller. Daddy thinks there's no one quite like him. They're going to call him to our Duqueboro Church, daddy says."

"Julia Henderson, do you know that you and your father are responsible for all that awkwardness at the door last night?"

"Well, I don't see why it had to be awkward. You knew who was coming with me. Phyllis wrote asking you for a visit while the best man was at our house. You ought to have come. Then it wouldn't have been awkward."

"Julia, I hate that man. He's a terror. How he blazed out last night, about meeting by accident. He needn't have told you all the misery of my acquaintance with him in that way."

"Misery? Where's the misery in knowing so nice a man? If I'd known him before I knew Felix —"

"Well, I wish you had, and had kept him out of my way."

"Why, Alice, what's he done? Keep him out of your way? When has he been in your way?"

"Every time I have seen him he has been in my way."

JULIA BECOMES MY CHAMPION 241

“Have you seen him so often?”

“I’ve seen him too often. You knew at the time all about St. David’s.”

“Yes, of course I knew about that. Where else has he been in your way?”

“Oh, in that drive into the Adirondacks. I wrote to you about that. And that night on *The Westernland*.”

“Well, I recollect what you wrote about that Adirondack experience. I thought he did you a great service. I wouldn’t say a man was in the way who wrapped me up in his storm blanket and coat and kept me dry. He was splendid then.”

“He did not wrap me up. That was Mr. Wendell.”

“Well, how about *The Westernland*, Alice?”

“Why, he was a passenger, and we met of course. The night before we landed, he came stumbling along in the dark and nearly fell over my steamer chair. I thought he had come seeking to see me, and I blazed out at him, and he blazed back again. That was all.”

“Is that all, Alice?”

“Isn’t that enough? I’m tired of him, and I wish you had seen him before you saw Felix.”

“How about that time you were with Felix, and saw him, Alice?”

“What time? What do you mean? Haven’t I told you times enough to show you how he gets in my way?”

“That won’t do, Alice. I mean the time before Schaus’ window, when you said a horrid thing and he ran into the street?”

“How did you know about that?”

“Felix told me. How else would I know?”

“Felix might have been in better business than

telling you about that. I was horrid, and afraid he'd be killed."

Then Julia Henderson laughed. She went over to her friend and put her arm around her, saying, "You transparent little goose. 'He's a terror,' and 'I hate that man.' Alice Leavenworth, you love that preacher, you know you do."

"Must I fall in love with the first handsome stranger, just because you lost your heart to Felix at first sight? I tell you I'm not falling in love with men that turn the cold shoulder on me the way he did in the Adirondacks."

Then Julia Henderson laughed once more as heartily as her father might have done. When she was quiet again, she said, "Oh, Alice Leavenworth, you are too absurd. You love him: you know you love him. I know girls. I wish you could have seen yourself as he drew back in a way that he meant should annihilate me, and said, 'This is not Miss Alcorn.' It was funny, Alice."

"Funny? I do not see where the fun was. He was angry; so was I, only I could not show it in my own doorway. What did you and your father mean by calling me Miss Alcorn?"

"Why, don't you know daddy yet, Alice? He's queer, you see. He's different from anyone else. He never does things as other men do."

"Yes, I know that. But what was the need of his being different about me?"

"Why, I expect he wanted to give you and Mr. Haynes a pleasant surprise."

"Surprise? Pleasant? How could John Haynes' coming here surprise me? Phyllis wrote me he would be at your father's. You wrote me that as

your father had a guest who lived in the East, you would take advantage of his home-going to visit me, as he had consented to serve as your escort. I knew who was coming. And I was rather enjoying the opportunity I would have of saying something within the lines of hospitality that would yet make him know he had deliberately broken his fine promise not to see me again except by accident. But I don't like the place you and your father put me in at all."

"But he did not go back on his promise. He had no idea he was going to see you. Daddy used the Alcorn name that Mr. Haynes might not know."

"No matter, I tell you I don't like it, Julia. I was mortified. I never want to see him again, and I wouldn't if mother hadn't asked him back to-night."

"Well, Alice, he behaved mighty well last night."

After that followed another long pause, then Julia began again. "Dearie," she said, "daddy thinks more of you than of any other woman in the world, outside his own family. And the preacher's daddy's pet. If he'd seen you last night, he would have told you to-day you were the most horribly polite and politely horrid girl he had ever seen. If I were John Haynes, I'd send a note to your mother telling her I wouldn't or couldn't come to-night."

"What did I do, Julia?"

"Tried to be a lady because he was in your own house, and to make him resentful for treating him as if he were an absolute nonentity."

"Well, Julia, that's what I meant to do."

"Yes, and when he was gone you treated that Fraser man as if he were the prince and you would be Cinderella, and you don't mean any such thing. I can't bear the Fraser man."

"Well, what if I like Bruce, what then?"

"You don't, you know you don't. And I am going to give you some advice. You love that preacher. You needn't blush. It's not a thing to be ashamed of. Daddy says he's the finest young preacher he knows, and he'll be in Duqueboro, pastor of our church, in four months. You see? And I'll have him marry Felix and me, and you'll be maid of honor. Now behave. Treat him decently. When he comes to-night, be as nice as you were to the Fraser man last night."

"But, Julia Henderson, I'll never marry a preacher. I never will."

"All right, my dear, you may never have the chance. You wouldn't if I were he. But if I were you, I'd be nice to-night, I would." Just then Willie came bouncing in. "Aunt Alice and Auntie Julia, supper's ready."

* * * * *

Two hours later, the two girls stood with me on the veranda, enjoying the marvelous panorama of river and mountain. But one thought interested me more than the glorious view. It was, that the maid of honor and the teacher of the mission class were probably identical. Returning to the parlor, the leading part in the conversation fell to me. I decided to take a risk and end my uncertainty. So I said to the maid of honor:

"I did not see you at the mission this afternoon."

"No," she replied, "I was unable to go. But what made you expect to see me there?"

"That's a rather hard question to answer," was my response. "The natural thing, for one who knows Mr. Smith, is to be interested in whatever interests him."

"Mr. Smith?" she repeated in a puzzled way. "But what made you think I had the honor of Mr. Smith's acquaintance?"

"Well, Mr. Smith is missionary of the First Church, and you belong to that church, and I know Joe so well that I'm sure that by this time he knows every man, woman, and child in that church."

"I see I can't deceive you," she laughed. "I do know Mr. Smith, and I'm not only interested in him and his work, but I'm a teacher in his mission." So there was one thing settled.

"I was almost sure of that," I answered. "And I taught your class this afternoon." With that remark I caught my lady's eye and saw clear to the bottom of it. The flash as from cold steel was not there.

"How do you know you had my class?" came her quick question.

"Do you wish me to tell you exactly how I knew?" I replied.

"Why, yes," she said. "There is nothing dreadful about that, is there?"

"Oh, no: quite the contrary," was my answer. "You will excuse my boldness, but Mr. Smith had told me," I paused for just a second, "had told me that one of the loveliest young ladies in the church was a teacher in his mission, and he wanted me to meet her. After the session began, he had to say, 'The lady isn't here; won't you take her class?' I had already seen that you were not there. So I only put two and two together."

"Your guess was very clever, and I see you haven't grown ungallant since you were at St. David's. Did you like my class?" she added.

"Oh, yes. But I've made an addition to it which I

fear you will not like. However, if you're the woman I hope you are, you'll accept the legacy which my day's teaching brings you."

Then I went on to tell in full the story of Tom, with no detail omitted. And the thought of those six girls and that mother in the poor hovel brought to the face of the maid of honor a look of warm tenderness which I had never seen there before. When I finished, she was leaning toward me.

"Do you mean," she asked, "that you did all that this afternoon? Did you forego your visit with your friends because of that poor boy?"

"I don't think I forewent anything," I replied. "It was plain duty, that was all."

"I'm very glad you did that duty," she said, "for it gives me one which I will try to do. I think there is a little lunch ready for us," she added, rising. "Will you come to the dining-room?"

When I said good-night and good-bye to them all, the maid of honor offered me her hand. "I will keep Tom," she said. "And if Grandview ever falls in your way again, as you travel, we will all be much pleased to see you."

With that, I went out into the night, feeling as that god of the Greeks must have felt, upon whose heels were wings.

XXI

JIM GARVEY REAPPEARS

I REACHED home Monday night, and found Greenton mantled in snow. The river was frozen, and I heard the ring of the skates of boys and girls with quickened pulse, thinking of the sport in store for Tim and me. Tim was a famous skater. When dinner was finished, the temptation to try the ice was strong. I took out my skates and was looking for my fur cap when a noise on the porch aroused me. There was a sound of feet stamping off the snow, and then a heavy pounding on the door. Hastening to answer the call, I threw open the door, and there stood Jim Garvey.

Astonishment, disgust, aversion, and pity were mingled as I saw him. My impulse was to say, "Get out, you vagabond." But through my mind the thought flashed, "You've been thinking you'd try to save this wretch if opportunity came. Here's your opportunity." So I said, "Come in, Jim," as heartily as I could, and, taking him to the library, I planted him comfortably before the wood fire.

"Have you had anything to eat to-day?" I asked.

"Not a mou'ful," was the answer.

"You've had too much to drink, though," I said.

He made no answer. I called my good housekeeper and bade her make some toast, a cup of strong coffee, and broil a steak. Then I began to talk to my unwelcome guest.

"Jim, I've been thinking about you often lately."

"Ain't been thinkin' no good, I s'pose. Ain't much like I use' ter be when I car'd water fer the byea, be I?" The poor wretch smiled a sickly smile.

"Yes, you are exactly the same you were then, only you're further along the road."

"What yer mean?" came over his thick tongue.

"I mean, when you were a boy, in the old baseball days, you were a vagabond; profane, foul-mouthed, aimless, tobacco-chewing, beer-drinking, worthless. You were hurrying hellward just as fast as you could go. You're just the same now, only a little nearer hell."

"D' yer think so?" said he. His respect for the cloth was all that kept him from an outbreak of anger.

"Yes, I think so, and I know so, Jim Garvey."

"Well—I ain't never had no chance." So he began a defense more crowded with profanity than any equal number of words I ever heard. "I growed up from nothin'. M' mother wan't no mother. All the men I ever seed drank and swore. I chawed terbacker 'fore I c'd walk, a'most. Ter beg was easier nor ter work. I never knowed when I didn't get drunk. Th' high bugs up town got just as drunk as I did. They got drunk on champagne. I got drunk on gin, that was all the differ. A drunk's a drunk, anyhow. Th' women in th' big houses gambled in th' parlors, with ice cream a-settin' by, an' I gambled in th' gin mills, an' the town gals a-fetchin' beer. The big bugs went to church, an' it wan't no place fer sech as me. Yer tried to help a little, but 'twan't no use. I was born on th' under side o' things, an' I've staid on th' under side o' things."

Said I, "Jim, I'll give you a good square meal

to-night, but there won't be any beer nor whiskey. Will you eat here in my house?"

"Yer bet I'll eat. I'm hungry."

I took him out to my mother's table, and sat down there with him. He grabbed his knife and fork, as a hungry tiger might strike his prey.

"Hold on, Jim," I said, "there's something that's always done at this table before anyone eats. Lay down your knife and fork." He obeyed in mute wonder. I asked God's blessing on that poor wretch, though I almost broke down in the asking.

He looked at me in dumb amazement for a full minute, without moving, then, breaking the silence, said, "What 'd ye do thet fer?"

"I was asking God to bless you and make you a better man."

"Is them church doin's?"

"Well, yes, you might say that. Christian people always ask God's blessing on their food. But now that it's done, you take hold and eat; you're hungry."

He did not have to be told twice. He drank the whole potful of coffee, strong enough to float an egg. He ate the toast and steak to the last scrap and crumb. When he had finished:

"You're the best man I ever see," he said. "I skipped my bail, yer know. Yer had ter pay thet, didn't yer?"

"Yes, I had to pay. But all I paid was money. There's One who has paid more than that for you."

"Who's He?"

"Jesus Christ. He's paid for all your poor, wretched, sinful life, with His own life."

"What'd He do thet fer?"

"Same reason I went your bail and got you work three or four times."

"What was er?" he said thickly.

"I thought there was something in you worth saving. I wanted to save it, or to help save it."

"What was er?"

"Your soul, Jim."

"That's too hot, parson. Can't hold er."

"But you must, Jim. Jesus Christ wants to save you, and I do. I want to see the man that's in you come out."

"Ain't no man in me nowhere, parson. Ain't no man."

"Yes, you are, Jim. There's a man in you, but it will take three persons to get him out."

"Who be they?"

"Jesus Christ, and you, and I."

"If that's Him, He's a good un. But 'e ain't up to you. He ain't no better nor you."

"Oh, yes, He is, Jim. I would not be good as you say I am, except for Him. All that I am He has made me."

"Hold on, parson. Don't curve 'em so." Presently he added, "I'm goin' now."

"Not yet, Jim: you've not told me yet why you came here to-night."

"Wal, I was strapped." So the pitiful story started, as Jim dropped back into his chair. "When I came out o' Sing Sing, they axed me whar I b'longed. I told 'em Greenton. They found out the railroad and stage fare, an' they gin me three seventy-five to git 'ere, an' fifteen dollars that I'd earned by bein' good. Just as soon as I got out o' the gate, a feller walked up, and he sez, 'Hello, pard; been expectin' ye. Yer

name's Mike, ain't it?' 'No,' sez I, 'it's Jim.' 'Oh, yes,' sez he, 'sure 'nough—Jim. Now, Jim—Jim what, did yer say?' 'Jim Garvey,' sez I. 'Oh, yes, I remember,' sez he. 'Now, Jim Garvey, come right over to my house. We're waitin' to see ye.' An' he took me over to his saloon. I hadn't had nothin' to drink in two year. He gin me a ball, an' I offered to pay, but he said no, that was his treat. Then he gin me another. Next thing I knowed, I was out in the country, in a barn, on the hay. Strapped—didn't hev a cent. I got inter the road—begged some breakfast at a house—then went on trampin' an' beggin'. Walked most o' the way up here. Been two days walkin' from Troy. Come back to the old town 'cause there wan't nowhere else ter go. Went ter Bob's, ter see ef I couldn't beg a drink o' gin, an' Bob ain't got no gin, 'cause he ain't got no bar. Bob says he's got pious. I couldn't go thet racket. Then I come over here ter ask yer how much I owed yer fer skippin' my bail." This was the first sign I had ever seen of anything like gratitude or humanity in him.

"Let that go, Jim: you can never pay that. But do you know, if the police find you here, they'll have you up on the old charge?"

"No! will they?" A look of real terror came into the face of the poor wretch. It was clear he wished no more attention from the police. To his frightened question I answered briefly, "Sure," and waited for the full power of fear to shake him thoroughly. After a few moments of thought:

"Parson," he said, "I'll git right out to-night." He rose, with the purpose of escape full upon him.

"No, Jim." I laid a detaining hand on his arm. "That means hell. That means more crime. You

have no friend but me in this world. You've got no money. You'll steal, or worse." He could not deny my prophecy. I went on with my pleading. "Stay here, Jim. Go with me to Justice Wendell in the morning. Give yourself up on the old charge. I'll go with you. It'll be jail for a year. Go to jail, and, when you come out, strike straight for me. Jimmie MacNaughton and Bob Hazeltine and Justice Wendell and I will be your friends. If I'm not here when you get out, go to Jimmie. He'll find you work. But you've got to quit gin," I finished, decidedly. "You've got to do just as we four men say."

"Don't Bob drink no more?" he asked.

"Not a drop."

"Don't Jimmie MacNaughton drink no more?"

"Not a drop."

"What's made 'em break off? What's happened to 'em?"

"Jesus Christ. He made them break off. He's happened to them."

"I can't git under that ball, parson. That beats me." Then he slouched down in his chair and was silent.

For fifteen minutes the room was as still as an uninhabited globe. I offered Jim a cigar, but he shook his head. I saw what I had never seen before, a besotted soul struggling for the first time with the idea of self-surrender for the sake of good. At last he roused up to say slowly:

"Parson, I'll stay; I'll go to jail."

"Good, Jim! good! I'll stand by you," I cried. "Now, I'm going to make sure that you do it. I'm going to give you a bath and put you to bed here."

To this he objected somewhat, but my will was

stronger than his and had its way. To the spare room which had been my mother's pride, I took him, and, after a hot bath in the bathroom opposite, he went to bed clean, I suppose for the first time in weeks.

But I was not yet assured of success in my plan. That such a fellow would be likely to change his mind was the natural thing to expect, and I felt a suspicion that he would attempt to sneak out of the house after all was quiet. I knew that Jim's only salvation lay in the county jail and in Jimmie MacNaughton's help when his time was served, so I determined to prevent his departure if he intended it.

In addition to all this, I had by no means forgotten the night, more than two years ago, when he stole the heirloom. That episode of the silver cup was a sore spot with me, but if the merciful Christ would only use me to save the soul of this wretched man, who, in his own words, "had never had no chance," the compensation would far outweigh the value of many silver cups.

Just as I closed the door on him, I said :

"Jim, you played a very dirty trick on me in this house long ago, when you stole my cup. Don't do it again to-night. You see, I'm trusting you once more. I'm giving you the best I have. Don't try to beat me this time, Jim."

"I won't," he said. "I won't, so help me."

But I knew my man well by this time.

I listened carefully until I heard him go to bed. Then I placed a chair by the door of his room and sat down to wait.

One o'clock came before any sound rewarded my vigilance. Then I heard Jim astir. He was very

quiet, and his tarrying lasted much longer than if he had been engaged only in dressing. Finally I heard a bureau drawer slide, and remembered what I had hitherto forgotten, or I should not have put temptation in his way. In one of the drawers of the bureau in the spare room was a morocco case, containing the jewelry that had been my mother's. Its value was probably not more than five hundred dollars.

The drawer creaked shut. Then I heard other noises, which I could only account for on the supposition that Jim was making examinations for some means of exit other than the door. Failing in this, however, there came presently a stealthy turning of the knob, and the door beside me opened.

"Are you sick, Jim?" I asked solicitously. "Do you want a doctor?"

At sight of me, he was the picture of guilt and despair.

"No, yer don't, parson," he groaned. "Yer know I don't want no doctor. Yer been watchin', 'cause yer guessed I'd try ter run away. I didn't mean ter, when I went ter bed, honest. But when a feller's alone he weakens."

"All right, Jim," I said gently. "I was afraid of just that, so I thought I'd watch. I want to help you to be a man, Jim, and I couldn't, if you ran away. But," I added, "I never for a moment thought you'd steal my mother's jewelry, until I heard you ransacking the bureau drawers."

"Tain't no use, parson," he cried, miserably. "Tain't no use. Yer'd better lemme go."

"No, Jim," I answered, firmly. "I made up my mind long ago to save you, if I had the chance. Now, God has given me the chance. But I can't do it, if

you run off. I can, if you'll go back to bed now, and to-morrow give yourself up to Justice Wendell."

The poor wretch had another struggle, standing there in the hall, with my mother's jewelry in his pocket. At last he burst out:

"I'll do her, parson! I'll go back ter bed—I will—I'll give myself up ter-morrer—I will. I didn't mean ter steal, when I went in there, parson. I didn't. But I'm bad," hopelessly. "If you peach, I'll get ten years in Sing Sing, next time. Don't blow on me, parson, 'n I'll quit stealin', I will."

"Give me what you've taken that belongs to me, Jim." He unloaded. From his pockets came rings, bracelets, chains, pins, buckles, hair ornaments, all inseparably connected with my mother and with my own childhood.

Poor Jim! he had never performed such an act of self-abasement before in all his life. For the first time, I think, he felt the sense of shame. I proceeded to deepen it.

"Jim," I said, "the case I had them all in was beautiful. Why did you not take that too?" He made no reply. "Did you leave that to pay me for the supper and the bath, Jim?"

Then he broke out: "Say, parson, don't rub her in no furder. I can't stan' it, I can't. I never seed nobody like you afore. I throw her up. I'll go to bed. You needn't set up no more. I'll be here in the mornin', an' I won't steal nothin'. I won't, so help me —" and the poor fellow swore a streak of oaths that was appalling. They were his only safety valve.

I took him at his word and went to bed. In the morning, when he was called for breakfast, he was there in the spare room, fast asleep. He came down

presently. After we had eaten, we went together over to Wendell's office, where he surrendered himself on the old charge. Tim sent him to the lock-up until court should meet in our county town in January. When that time came he pleaded guilty, saved a trial, and on the petition of Hazeltine, Wendell, Harfis, and myself, the court gave him one year in the county jail, instead of a longer term in the State prison. Jimmie MacNaughton agreed that on the day Jim was set free he would be at the jail door to take him in hand, and to keep him away from the sharks that are always waiting for such carrion. When all this was settled, we formed an association, whose members were Wendell, Hazeltine, MacNaughton, and myself, and whose purpose was to bring Jim Garvey to his lost manhood.

XXII

THREE LETTERS

CHRISTMAS was coming on very rapidly, and there were certain things to be made ready for that holiday time which the maid of honor could execute better than any other person. To engage her services made a letter necessary, and though the experiment was a risk, I decided to try the one and take the other. But to write the letter was not easy. It would be my first to the woman I loved, and I did not wish it to be the last. After some futile attempts, I wrote as follows:

"MY DEAR MAID OF HONOR:

"I trust my title for you will awake the same pleasurable memories as are mine when I think of our meeting at St. David's.

"I am writing to you because Christmas is approaching, and I am anxious to give a little Christmas to Tom, my legacy to you. I inclose a little sum of money, and wish with it you would buy for him a Bible with good coarse print. I want him to have a pair of warm mittens to wear to Sabbath-school, and a coarser woolen pair for every day. If you see anything else you think he will need, and there is money left, please buy him what your sense of the fitness of things dictates, and tell him the things are from a friend. You need not tell him who I am, for he will not know.

"I should be glad to know by and by if Tom comes to the mission steadily. I am,

"Very sincerely yours,
"THE BEST MAN OF ST. DAVID'S."

There yet remained some things to be done, suggested by my sincere desire for Tom's betterment, which the maid of honor could not do. His shanty home must be repaired. A new sill for the entrance was sadly needed; a door with only one hinge was almost worse than none; while a house from whose windows the panes of glass were gone would make but a cheerless Christmas, no matter how many Bibles might be given to Tom. Elder Harfis was still in Grandview, and I knew that if Joe would once take him to that pitiful home, he would gladly pay the cost of doing the things needed to make it more livable. So another letter went to Joe, containing these suggestions and a request that the work should be done before Christmas day.

With these matters satisfactorily arranged, my attention was turned once more to the work in Green-ton. For the first time in a pastorate of more than four years, a restless and feverish spirit held me. The idea of a call to Duqueboro was always in my mind. I definitely wanted that call, although the largeness of the place which the thought had made for itself in my mind annoyed me. To leave my boyhood's home—my father's and my mother's graves—the church which had grown from a small one of three hundred members to a large one of more than eight hundred—Tim Wendell—Elder Harfis—to leave all this would cost me many a pang. And yet I wanted to go. Duqueboro was attractive because of Henderson. The eccentric, warm-hearted, altogether singular Scotchman had become very dear to me.

All through the holiday season, my work was done feverishly, half-heartedly. With each day's mail, I looked for two letters which did not come. One

would have borne the postmark "Grandview," and the other, "Duqueboro." Finally, when my hot blood had made my nerves too unsteady for work, to end the suspense I wrote to Henderson. I told him first the story of Jim Garvey. With this as preliminary I came at last to the only things for which the letter had been begun.

"You are a Scotchman," I wrote. "You did me all up on the Grandview excursion. I can see now what all your moves meant. The visit to Duqueboro, Miss Julia's need of an escort to Grandview, the delay to the end of the week, were part of a plan to land me in Grandview and bring me face to face with your girl, who was also my girl, which you knew and I did not. The Social Union was a ruse, too. You wanted to make me tell that story before your Presbyterians so as to make an impression on some who did not hear me preach that Sunday. You took mighty good care next day that I shouldn't see the morning paper with its red headlines. I bought one of a newsboy on the train, and I have that wonderful article pasted in my scrap-book for my children to read. But you failed, 'I doubt,' as you love to say, in both your games. The girl had discounted me long ago, and the Kir Jear Church discounts me now. You played me as you did the big trout at Greenton, and you landed me on the Grandview porch all right; beyond that, you failed. But I'll give you credit for sense about a woman's beauty. She is beautiful. She's the most beautiful woman I have ever seen.

"Strange, about that girl. Three different men pick out a girl for me to marry, and each of them vows she is the most beautiful girl he knows. When I get the thing sifted down to the facts, lo and be-

hold, she is the very same girl. Harry wants me to marry Phyllis's maid of honor. You want me to marry Julia's beautiful friend. Joe Smith wants me to marry his lovely mission Sabbath-school teacher. You want me to marry her: Joe wants me to marry her: Harry wants me to marry her: I want me to marry her. We're all agreed, except the girl: she doesn't want me to marry her.

"Oh, she was nice enough: she couldn't help herself. But I made no conquest. She has a constant attendant, a man called Fraser, not in the least worthy of her. When you see Harry Sinclair, tell him that the maid of honor is more than a match for the Rev. Joseph Smith and the Rev. Dr. Henry Sinclair and David Henderson, Esq.

"You've missed on the church scheme, too. Those headlines killed me. In Greenton I was born, and here I'll stay and work and die. My bachelor home is good enough for any man, and with it I will be content. Come out in April, and we'll try the trout.

"With affection yours,
"THE 'NO BENEDICTION' PREACHER."

To post that letter was a grim satisfaction. There would be an answer from Henderson, of course, which would in some way settle several things. So I waited with quieter nerves.

That same twentieth day of January, one year to a day since my receipt of the memorable letter from Harry Sinclair, in Rome, was signalized not only by the posting of my epistle to Henderson, but by the coming in the evening mail of a letter from Grandview, whose superscription, alas, had been written by the hand of Joe Smith. Before the reading of it was

finished, disappointment at the familiar handwriting had given way to delight at its contents.

Joe began in his own way :

"OLD BOY :

" You think you're smart. Well, so do I. You beat me on the girl game. I'm not in the play when you begin. I've been too busy with Christmas celebration and the 'Week of Prayer' in January and a blessed revival that followed in the mission, to write letters even to so good a friend as you. But now I've come to a breathing place, and I've a great story to tell you. Your letter about Tom's home came all right, and the day before Mr. Harfis went home we walked down there. He was horrified. He did not suppose there could be such squalor and misery in the centre of our American life. We found out who owned the place, and Harfis never rested until he cornered the owner and bought the shanty for one thousand dollars. Then he gave me orders to look after the repairs. The day after he returned to Greenton, I started a contractor at the work of repairing the house, and the first person I met, as the contractor and I stepped into the house, was my mission school teacher, the girl I wanted you to see and who wasn't at the school. Oh, you fraud! I was surprised, and so was she. She spoke first. Women always do. 'How do you happen to be here, Mr. Smith?' 'Oh, I came to look after the wants of a new mission scholar who was in school last Sunday.' 'Was the scholar one that you found and brought into the school?' she said. 'Oh, no; nobody found him,' I answered. 'He came in and dropped down into the first inviting place. I had a friend here over

Sunday, a preacher from Greenton, and he had your class, got interested in this boy, and went home with him after school. He came back to my house to dinner and told me what a wretched place the boy came from, and after he got home he wrote me to go down and look after some repairs and have them made before Christmas. But what brought you down here?' She laughed and said, 'That same man, your preacher friend. He wrote asking me, too, to provide some little things for Tom's Christmas, and he sent the money for them, so I came to see what else might be needed.' Then I said, too astonished to believe I had heard aright, 'Do you know the Greenton preacher?' 'Oh, yes,' said she, 'he was Miss Henderson's escort, and dined with us Saturday night, and spent Sunday evening, after coming from your house.' I whistled. 'You seem amused,' said she. 'I am,' said I. 'Why didn't he tell me he knew you?' 'Was there any reason why he should tell you?' she said. And there she had me. I couldn't tell her what the reason was. I said, 'Did you think he was nice?' She laughed and answered, 'Yes, Mr. Smith, I have always thought that, ever since I first knew him.' Then I was at sea worse than ever. I blundered along, 'First knew him? Have you known him before now?' 'Why, yes,' she answered, 'he was best man at a wedding where I was maid of honor, more than two years ago.'

"Say, boy, you beat the whole combination! But why in the name of all the old Greek gods and goddesses you didn't go after that girl when it would have done you some good, I can't understand. I'm afraid it's too late now. Bruce Fraser is around here all the time—every Saturday night and Sunday.

Dr. Fraser is one of the best, but the son is bad all through. I hear he has said if you don't keep away from here he'll throw you into the river some night. Helen says Miss Leavenworth doesn't care for Bruce, but I'm afraid the matter has gone too far.

"I must stop. Tom's going to have a comfortable home, and he comes regularly to mission school every Sunday afternoon.

"Good-bye, old man. You beat Henderson all hollow.

"Ever yours,
"JOE."

Even with that letter, with its information regarding my lady's favor, the end had not been reached of the things capable of making me happy, that grew out of my visit to Grandview. The most blessed event of my life was my discovery of Tom. Two days later a letter came from Grandview, the letter that had been so anxiously awaited. My custom was to open the mail as I walked home from the post-office, but this morning saw a departure from that custom. I put the letter into my pocket unopened, to remain there until I reached my easy chair before the study fire. My excitement was beyond anything ever caused by a letter before.

To transcribe its words from memory is easy. A second and a third reading fastened its contents in my heart. This is what the peerless lady wrote:

"**MY DEAR BEST MAN OF ST. DAVID'S:**

"As that is the form of your signature, I suppose that is the way in which you would be addressed. Your letter written before Christmas was welcome, since it gave me an opportunity to do a little good. I

bought the Bible for one dollar, two pairs of mittens for one dollar and a quarter, three pairs of socks for seventy-five cents. I also bought a pair of heavy shoes for two dollars. That just used up the money which you so kindly sent.

"I have heard from Mr. Smith of the purchase of the place where Tom lives, and of the repairs which are in progress. Mr. Smith said that this also was prompted by your thoughtfulness. You would have full reward could you see the happiness that has come to the mother, and the different look that may already be seen in Tom's face. I had a real joy on the Sunday that I gave him the Bible. He is the most stupid and stolid soul I have ever seen. On that same day I had had an experience with him which utterly disconcerted me. That was before I gave him the Bible. The Sunday after you were here, I gave Tom a lesson paper and told him two or three times over what it was for and how to use it. I read the Golden Text and had him read it also. I asked him to learn it by heart. Well, he came next Sunday, and when I tried him, here is what resulted:

"Tom, what is the Golden Text?"

"I dunno."

"Why, yes, Tom, you must know; can't you think?"

"I dunno."

"Why, Tom, it begins, "Though—I am—poor"—what comes next, Tom?"

"I dunno."

"Have you studied the lesson, Tom?"

"No answer."

"Have you, Tom?"

"No answer."

“‘Why don’t you answer me, Tom?’

“‘I dunno.’

“‘Have you studied the lesson at all, Tom?’

“A shake of the head and a muttered inarticulation was his only response.

“‘Why did you not study, Tom?’

“‘I dunno.’

“I gave up utterly defeated, wholly despairing, and wishing your legacy was with its giver ; to my further annoyance, the rest of the boys were laughing at my failure. But when toward the close of the hour I gave Tom the Bible, I had a little compensation. He was really pleased. He took it, leaned forward as if he would speak, mumbled something probably intended for thanks, and subsided into silence. I asked him if he would try to read that Bible, and he answered, ‘I dunno.’ Since then he has been regularly in the school, and he washes his hands and face before coming. You were pleased to call this boy your legacy to me. I have described what I have done thus far with the trust. Thanking you for the opportunity you have given me of showing a kindness in your name to this poor soul,

“I am yours sincerely,

“THE MAID OF HONOR.”

It was near to ten o’clock in the morning, when the reading of that letter was finished. The clock struck eleven, and found me still seated before the fire, with the letter in my hand. The clock struck twelve, finding me still there, with the letter in my hand. Presently there came a call to luncheon, which broke my reverie. After the meal, I made a careful copy of the letter, went up to the spare

room, took out the morocco case of jewels, laid the original in the case, locked it in securely, carried the whole down to the city bank, rented a safe deposit box, a thing I had never thought of when there was only jewelry to protect, and placed therein my treasures. There is no question but that I was in love. The girl had written no word that looked at all as if she cared for me, and yet —— !

My pastoral calls that afternoon were poor affairs. Before my vision was always the maid of honor. When the afternoon had passed, and I reached home, I found a telegram awaiting me from Henderson. It read :

“Called unanimously to Kir Jear Church. Salary four thousand, and house. Wait letter.
“HENDERSON.

The letter came next day. Henderson wrote for the session.

“DEAR PASTOR TO BE:

“The session has asked me to communicate to you the action of the congregational meeting.

“The reason why it was not held earlier was the coming of Christmas and the week of prayer. You know the week of prayer is the most important week of the whole year. That is the week in which all the churches have agreed that God is around, if He ever is. He doesn’t have anything else to do that week but listen to prayers. He has a hard time hearing prayers in Kir Jear Church, I doubt, for only Major Ardman, and the old colored janitor, and a little lawyer named Brush, ever pray. I pray, of course, but I don’t like

to pray every night. But the week of prayer is orthodox, and it always has been held in Kir Jear Church, and it always must be. What's orthodox has to go, whether it does any good or not. When the week of prayer was over, we were all pretty nearly worn out, but we called the congregational meeting.

"The first thing to be done after they had elected me chairman was to hear the report of the committee on finding a pastor. I announced that as the first order of business, but before Lewis Jordan could get to his feet, a little man rose and said, 'I move the committee on finding a pastor be discharged. They have been going all over, spending our money for a year, and it was all no good. A chance man comes along, as the chairman's guest, and he pleased everybody. I move we call that man.' Then another man hopped up and said, 'Was that the man with the red head ——'

"'No, sir, it ain't,' said the little man. 'My man's head ain't red. It's blacker than yours. I move we call him.' 'Wait till I get through,' said the other man. 'Is he the man with the red headlines in the *Clarion* ?'

"Then I told 'em the *Clarion* stuff was a pack of lies, and I set you up in good shape. Jordan seconded the little man's motion, and we took a ballot. You got every vote that wasn't cast for some other man. Then a motion was made to make the call unanimous, with four thousand and a house. They passed that with a big noise.

"Now, you're going to have a house. And you can't live in a house without a wife. So you see you've got to marry the girl I found for you. You say she don't care for you. Man, she's only waiting for you to ask her whether she does or no. You thought I didn't know before who was the girl you

were so dead in love with. Why, man, I knew that night at your mother's table. I knew who Phyllis's maid of honor was, at the time of the wedding. You can't fool a Scotchman. I would have had you landed long ago, if your lovely mother hadn't gone away so unexpectedly. I've had my own time with you. Now, I want you married.

"Julia's a credit to her Scotch father. She knew all about you and the Grandview girl, when you and she went east. She told me how you acted on the porch that night. She fooled you. She told me about that letter you wrote about Tom. Those two girls saw right through that whole performance. You're nothing but an ostrich, with your head in the sand, thinking because your foolish top is out of sight, your unco tall body is too—and the two lassies standing by, laughing.

"But there's one thing Julia don't like. There's a man she calls 'the Fraser man' hanging around there too much. He's Dick Leavenworth's manager. He spends every Saturday night and Sunday in that town. I don't know what he is, but Julia don't like him, and I've picked that girl out for you. If you let that man make off with her, I'll never let you preach in Duqueboro.

"Run down the river, lad. Don't go talking about love, and laying your heart at her feet, and all such nonsense. Just tell her Davie Henderson sent you down to marry her, and have done with it. Then obey the Book, and shake off the dust of your feet against Greenton—or I should say snow, I doubt. Tell Harfis I'm robbing him of a preacher that you may fulfill the Scriptures, for how could you 'go into all the world and preach the gospel,' if you staid in that

little country town ? Tell the infidel I'm evening up with him now for tipping me into the water. We'll console him every spring, for we'll go back to that bonnie river, and I'll show him how to cast a fly so the trout will rise. Or, if you can get Harfis, and Jimmie MacNaughton, and Bob, and Wendell, all to come with you, we'll make 'em all elders in Kir Jear.

"Come on, now. Get together your congregation ; call your presbytery ; ask for your dissolution ; make your church call Joe Smith ; and everybody'll be happy. That's all now.

"DAVID HENDERSON."

My first move after receiving this remarkable letter was to drive to Salisbury, the county seat, to see Jim Garvey. Not much persuasion was required to induce the sheriff to let me see his prisoner alone. Jim was full of joy at sight of me. I said to him :

"Garvey, when you leave this jail I will not be in Greenton. But Jimmie MacNaughton and Mr. Harfis and Mr. Wendell, and Mr. Hazeltine will be there, and there will be a new preacher in my place who's a better man than I ever was, for he knows all about drunks and toughs generally."

To which he replied, "Cut her out, parson. There ain't no better man nor you be, livin'."

"Thank you for the good opinion, Jim," I said. "But I'm telling you the truth, and you'll say so, some day."

Jim looked more like a man, that day, than ever before. The jailer agreed to let Squire Wendell know all about him, and on what day next winter he would be discharged. Then, having driven home, my

next duty was to tell Tim Wendell of all that had occurred. He looked at me a moment.

"Dominie," he said, "that's a good call. The time comes to almost every minister when he has to change his field of labor. That time has come to you. You'll go, of course. But I tell you, and I hope you'll remember some day that I said it, you're going away from home. There's not another Greenton River in the Union. There's not another Bob Hazeltine and Charlie. There's not another Jimmie MacNaughton. There's not —" But before he went any further, I rose and grasped his hand. I said, "You've been a good friend to me, and what you have said is all true, but you have not said it all: there's not another Tim Wendell on earth."

There was silence for a few minutes. Then Tim said, "But, Dominie, it's probably best, and we'll call Joe Smith for our pastor. There's only one Joe Smith, and he's the only man that's fit to stand in your place."

XXIII

ON THE THRESHOLD AT DUQUEBORO

IT was the second Tuesday of April. The presbytery had met that day, and the business in connection with dissolving one pastoral relation and constituting another had moved with such celerity that the only break in the pastorate of Greenton Church had been from eleven in the morning until three in the afternoon. Presbytery had not dismissed me, but had elected me commissioner to the General Assembly to meet in Grandview in May. Joe and I sat together in the study.

"Well, Joe," I said, "I'm out, you're in, and it seems like a dream. Do you remember the first address you made in the old church?"

"That's what I do. It was the best I ever made."

"Yes, in some respects it was. But you are vastly superior as a preacher now to what you were then, and I think a career is beginning for you here."

"Career don't bother me," he said. "It's conduct I am after."

"Joe, do you like this house?" I went abruptly at the thing I had in mind.

"Sure: I've had some great hours in this house."

"Well, you'll have more great hours here, for here's where you and Helen are going to live. I've deeded this house to you and Helen."

Joe jumped up and pulled me out of my chair.

"Now for the old grip of the old fraternity, Jack," he cried. "To Helen and me? Why, you're crazy, man."

"No, I'm not. I want the church to remember my mother and me. So this house is yours until you leave it. When you go elsewhere, you must deed it to the session—not to the trustees, but to the session—of Greenton Presbyterian Church, to be used as a residence by whoever is the pastor. All this is in the deed. Should you fail to do all that is specified in the deed, the property will revert to me or my heirs. But you cannot alienate it." With that I handed him the deed.

"But say, old man," he remonstrated, "you can't afford to do this."

"No matter; I've done it," I answered. "Will you do your part when the time comes?"

"Sure." And his hearty hand-clasp expressed, better than halting words, his sincere thanks.

"Then, when you have moved in, you and Helen, will you have this picture hung over the mantel in the dining-room?" I stepped across the room and drew away a drapery from a window. Leaning against the window-sill was an oil painting of my mother, which the curtain had kept concealed. Joe was on his feet again instantly, and standing before the picture.

"Dominie," he cried, "that's beautiful! That is just as she looked the night Elder Harfis and I had our meeting."

"Yes, Joe, it's a good portrait. Now, I want you to hang it as I say. The name by which this whole town knew her is engraved on the plate at the bottom of the frame."

Joe stooped and read, "Aunt Caroline." "That's

ON THE THRESHOLD AT DUQUEBORO 273

right," he said, "that's what she was. And while I live here, Aunt Caroline shall look down on every soul that enters the dining-room. Anything more?"

"Yes," I answered, "one thing more, Joe. The worst human, or unhuman, that this town ever produced, is Jim Garvey. He's in the county jail now. I've given you the house, now I'll give you this wretch. He'll come out of jail next January, and Jimmie MacNaughton's to meet him the day he comes out, and bring him here. The last place he slept, before he went to jail, was my spare room. The first place in which he's to sleep, after he comes out of jail, must be that spare room. Helen won't like that," I went on, "but it's what I want. You do that, and you'll have one more star in your crown, Joe, for I'm convinced that it will be the last thing necessary to bring him to righteousness. That room saw him take his first steps toward God. That room may be the place where he will take the final steps toward God. Will you do it, Joe?"

"Yes, old boy, I'll do it. But you are away beyond me with your Toms and your Jims."

"I think, Joe, you can save him," I answered. "Harcis and Wendell, Bob and MacNaughton, are a committee to look after him, with you as chairman. They understand already." Then I told him the whole story, and ended by asking, "Will you undertake the trust, Joe?" And the great-hearted fellow cried in answer, "Yes, yes, yes; I'll undertake the trust."

Major Ardman met me at the station on my arrival in Duqueboro. "You are going to be our guest for a while," he explained. "Felix will be married next week, and Mrs. Ardman says she wants company.

You'll stay until after General Assembly." So, comfortably housed, I began a long and happy pastoral life.

The wedding was like all such affairs. There was much bustle of preparation, much coming and going, much fluttering among the young people, and at last it was over. The central point of interest in it for me was not the bride. As I said the solemn service, my thoughts were busy with the radiant figure of the bride's maid of honor; but I could not get the view of her loveliness that I had enjoyed at St. David's. My eyes were perforce fixed on Julia and Felix. For two whole days I had been in and out at the Henderson home, but had hardly the satisfaction of a word with her. She was almost as distant in manner as at any time in the past two years. But just as good-nights were being said by the guests, after Felix and Julia had gone, she advanced with a word to me. "I would like very much to talk with you about Tom," she said.

"Does that mean I may call before you go home?" I made haste to answer.

"Yes," she replied, "but you'll have to call to-morrow, if at all, for I start for home the next day."

But to make that call before the evening of the next day was impossible. The preparation necessary for my first prayer-meeting with the new church wholly engrossed me. When the hour for that arrived, there came with it a clear realization that Wendell had spoken the truth when he said, "You are going away from home." My case was one of unmistakable homesickness in that meeting, my embarrassment being increased by the presence of the girl with Henderson. I was glad she was there; yet, at the same time, I

ON THE THRESHOLD AT DUQUEBORO 275

wished her far away. Nothing of that service remains in my memory, save Henderson's speech just before the close. "We have a new pastor," he said in his abrupt way, "and new pastors dinna come every night, I doot. Good new pastors are as scarce as blackberries in January. But be our new one guid or bad, there's only ae thing to do by him, that's to stand by him. I shall stand by him. I always stand by my pastor, right or wrang, especially if he's right."

Henderson and the maid of honor and I walked down the street together. At his door, Henderson said, "I'll leave you young things to yer loneselves; I've business for a while." As we passed into the parlor, the realization came over me that this was the first time, in more than two years of acquaintance, that we two had been alone together as friends. She began the conversation at once.

"I somewhat expected you this afternoon, since you were good enough to say last night you would like to talk with me about Tom."

There was finesse in that speech. She put the burden of that interview off on me in an exceedingly clever way, though it was she herself who had proposed talking about Tom.

I said nothing of what I thought, however, but replied, "Yes, I'm glad you have given me an opportunity to talk about Tom. But parish matters occupied me so, that until after the meeting it was impossible to give any time even to so interesting a subject. But I am yours now, to hear whatever interests you, for it will surely interest me."

"You discovered Tom, you know, or he discovered you," she said. "Your story, told that Sunday night last December to Julia and me, made such a deep

impression that I would have visited Tom anyway, had you not written me about him. But I wondered whether you had forgotten him by this time."

"Oh, no, I haven't forgotten him, but I've been very much taken up with preparations for removing from Greenton."

"I know you must have been busy," she said, "but we can talk a little about Tom now, can we not? I want to talk about him."

"Yes," I replied, "I'll talk about him gladly; or rather I'll hear you talk about him."

"The first month he came to the class I didn't know what to do," she began. "He could not learn. The other boys considered him a joke, and when they laughed at his efforts he would relapse into absolute silence.

"I decided to take them, one at a time, to his house, and show them how and where he lived. After that, they didn't laugh much. They helped."

"Does he learn the Golden Texts yet?" I inquired.

"Yes, he has accomplished that. The first time he recited one correctly, and I praised him, there came to his face the first look of self-satisfaction that probably ever crossed it. That made me very happy. I came very near writing to you about that."

"I wish you had," I said earnestly.

It was delightful to watch her face as she continued. Her flashing eyes and changing color were so charming that to keep my lips from uttering what my pounding heart was forging on love's anvil, was almost impossible. When at last she paused, I said, "You have been doing a great work, and it will bear fruit. Tom will be a means of grace to those other boys, or I am mistaken. But do you think he has any comprehen-

ON THE THRESHOLD AT DUQUEBORO 277

hension of what the mission school means? Does he care for the things you teach?"

"Sometimes I think so. But I am often puzzled. There cannot be much comprehension when he recites a text as he did once, 'The Lord wrote spectacle mirrors by the hands of Paul.'"

"That was funny. How did you keep from laughing?"

"Oh, I've learned not to," she replied. "The boys did laugh, in spite of me, when he said, 'Blessed is that servant whom his Lord when he cometh shall find washing.' But I said, 'Boys, that is one of the best texts Tom has ever learned. See how clean his hands are to-day,' and the smile that passed over the poor fellow's face was lovely to see."

"Your story reminds me of one a friend of mine told me once about an uneducated preacher among the mountains of Kentucky. He was preaching against the game of marbles as played by the boys. He insisted that it was very demoralizing, teaching them to gamble, and further than that he declared it was contrary to the Scriptures, for the Book of God says, 'Marble not.'"

We both laughed heartily, and then our talk drifted to the deeper spiritual needs of poor Tom. I said all I could to aid her in her purpose to help Tom, and her outspoken appreciation made me very happy.

"You have comforted me greatly," she cried. "I will go back to the mission with a purpose to wake Tom to conscious need of Christ. I think he already feels that need, though I can't quite tell. But I am under lasting obligations to you. You will be in Grandview at the General Assembly, Mr. Henderson says, and I hope you'll visit the mission. I want you

to see Tom—perhaps you'll see a greater change in him than I do, and you may then be able to tell what further to do."

"I am not sure that I can tell you what to do further in that direction," was my answer. But my thought was, "I can tell you easily enough what I wish you would do in another direction." And then, in fear lest my tongue should get the better of my judgment, I said good-night and good-bye.

XXIV

GRANDVIEW ONCE MORE

HENDERSON and Major and Mrs. Ardman stood with me at the Twenty-second street pier in New York. General Assembly was to convene next day in Grandview, and we were waiting for the boat that would carry us to our destination.

"An' ye never rode on the *Mary Powell*?"

"No, I never did."

"Man, yer education was neglected, I doot. I'm only an American since my boyhood, but I've made the trip. The Rhine is finer after ye pass Coblenz. Her banks have had the touch of the human hand longer. But there's no *Mary Powell* on the Rhine."

Henderson knew how to touch the vibrant chord in a human heart.

Every Hudson River dweller loves the old boat as if it were his own. Presently she hove in sight, graceful as a swan. She came alongside the pier and we went aboard. So quick and quiet were the stop and start, her movement seemed almost automatic. I said to the Major, "I half believe this boat could start and make the run and all the landings from force of habit, if there were never a man in her crew. Do you suppose boats have souls, Major?" No answer was expected to that question, but Henderson had heard it.

"Losh, man," he said, "are ye daft ere ye reach

Grandview? What'll ye be when ye get there and see yon girl?"

"I'm not going to see any girl," I replied. "I'm a commissioner to the Assembly, and that will take all my time."

"But the Assembly doesn't meet till the morrow, and what's to hinder seein' the girl the night?"

"Only this: when she was at your house, she spoke about my seeing that boy Tom at the mission on Sunday, but she did not ask me to see her. And I can't call until I'm invited." And there Mrs. Ardman relieved me.

"Mr. Henderson," she said, "I want Mr. Haynes to go with me to the bow. The view is far too lovely to waste time in talk."

We were fortunate to get two chairs very close to the bow. The afternoon was perfect. Far over us in the azure floated the great air-ships, God's wondrous clouds, each laden with a precious freight of water for a thirsting earth, and each sailing across and ever across the vast space-ocean from horizon to horizon, the distant view dimmed by the dreamy haziness of budding spring. May is the greatest impressionist painter of them all. How the bow cut the water! The severed edges of the liquid surface swept backward until the brawling paddle-wheels tore them, broke them, scattered them, and strewed the fragments, beaten flecks of foam, in the long wake of the swift steamer. Past the piers with their noisy life, past the craft of various names, past the long rows of buildings, past Spuyten Duyvil, past the green shores, past Tarrytown where poor Major André paid the penalty of too great fidelity to a government that would stoop to potter with a traitor, past Sing Sing,

with its frowning walls and their aggregation of lost souls, the staunch vessel held her way, while each rood left behind made one rood less between me and the woman in whom my life hopes were centred, for I knew I should see her, though I had put Henderson's suggestion aside. That afternoon ride was a poem vastly more beautiful because wordless. Both the lady and I had grown silent under the spell of boat and sky and river and mountain. It was Mrs. Ardman who first spoke. "Was ever anything more beautiful?" she said. Before I could answer, Henderson came bustling up. "Come awa', man. Ye're wastin' time, dronin' here. Was ye never in a boat before, man? There's commissioners on the boat. Acquaintance is everything to a new man. Ye hae no met Dr. Sandwich, I doot." His voice was cheery, but my reply was gruff: "No! I haven't. And that I do not want to meet him just now, don't doubt. Leave Mrs. Ardman and me to enjoy our poem for a little time longer. I'll see all the men I want to see to-morrow."

"Your poem? Losh, man, are ye daft? Ye're no readin'—ye've no a buik. Come awa', man. Let sic folly go. Come awa' and see the Doctor." With that, he seized my arm and carried me reluctant away.

Dr. Sandwich was from the West. He was a little, weazen-faced man, dark and wiry. When I had been introduced to him, and he spoke, his voice astonished me more than his appearance. It was hollow and sepulchral, sounding as one would imagine a skeleton's voice might. There are times when bows, handshakings, and the words which follow presentations are safety valves for laughter. This was one of those

times, though fears filled me lest the Doctor should see that my bow and my words were tinctured with amusement. Henderson saw the thoughts in my mind, and took charge of the situation.

"Come, Doctor," he said. "Come, pastor; let's go to a quieter spot. We can talk better apart from the throng, I doot."

I agreed eagerly, adding, "Let's go to the bow; it's quiet there, and lovely." My thought was, "Henderson and Dr. Sandwich will do the talking, and I will have another taste of my poem."

But that bliss was denied. Henderson's first words were addressed to me. "I suppose ye ken that Dr. Sandwich is a candidate for moderator o' the General Assembly?"

How to answer was the problem. Dr. Sandwich and his candidacy were as unknown to me as the Choctaw language to King Solomon. But to say that would doubtless give offense. So I answered, as I thought, with tact, "The ambition to be moderator has always seemed to me laudable——" The Doctor was about to reply, but Henderson was too quick for him.

"Losh, man, what has ambition to do with it? There's nothing laudable about ambition. It's shakin' the tree, and gettin' the plum, that's laudable. There'll be many candidates, I doot. I carena for the candidates. It's the man who gets there, I like. Most of the candidates will be cant-didates, I doot."

I looked at my elder in amazement. He had never before attempted a pun in my presence. Curiosity as to how the Doctor would take it filled me, but was satisfied quickly. The deep, skeleton voice replied, "You mistake, sir, about my being a candidate. I am

not one, in any individual sense. My friends are the real candidates. My synod and my presbytery are the real candidates. They wish the honor for the good it will do the cause of Christ in the section from which I come. For that reason I should like your vote, Doctor—ah—Doctor—ah —”

I came to the rescue of his short memory.

“Let the titles go, Dr. Sandwich,” I said. “I’m no doctor. I’m plain John Haynes. I’ve never been to a General Assembly. You honor me by asking me to support you, and if there are no other candidates, I will gladly —”

“Hoot, man! to gie sic an answer as that to the Doctor! Of coorse there will be ither candidates, and they’ll a’ be like him, not candidates as individuals, but only as representin’ the desires o’ their freends. Can’t ye see? It’s a peety for the Assembly, I wad be thinkin’.”

Henderson had made many speeches during our acquaintance, but never one like that. It was so shrewd a mixture of banter and earnest, and satire that I found it difficult to keep a straight face.

Dr. Sandwich, too, looked somewhat puzzled; but when he spoke he only said, “Well, Mr. Haynes, your elder has told me you are a fine speaker, and if, when you have learned who the other candidates are—for that is what your answer means, I suppose; you want to know who are the candidates ere you decide—if after that you decide to support me,”—he hesitated, cleared his throat, then went on, “I shall be delighted to have you second my nomination. The Rev. Dr. Blough, of my own synod, will nominate me. I understand you are in the Assembly as a commissioner from the Synod of New York, and my friends would

deem it most effective to have the Synods of Illinois and New York united in the nomination —”

Just then relief came. The ship's bell began to toll for her landing at West Point. Excusing myself and finding Mrs. Ardman, we went back to our place in the bow. No Sandwiches nor aught else could get me away from that outlook. Into the lower gate of the Highlands we sped, and through those waters so sublimely environed by Dunderberg and Cro' Nest, and the lower Beacon Mountains. Then out at the north gate and into Grandview Bay, where away above sparkled the early lights of the city, which to me was Mecca, though my feet were bent toward no dead prophet's tomb, but the earthly paradise of a living angel.

Henderson came up as we watched the city, now so very near, and with one of his indescribable looks said, “Did ye like the sample I produced for ye of the ways o' the candidates? That was only a nibble ye had. Wait for the morrow, lad. Ye'll have a guid bite before the noonday. But I gave ye a leetle experience, I doot.”

I spent the evening on the roof of the Balustrade, enjoying the wonderful view from the parapet of the roof pavilion. Just before bedtime Henderson came up. “An' it's here ye are—hidin' frae guid company. I thought ye had gone to the Terrace until I saw Mr. Dick. He said ye werena there. Ye said ye wadna go till asked to ca', but I didna think ye were so silly as to mean it.”

“Well, I shall not go until I am invited,” I said.

“Hoot, man! Must I go an' bring her to the Balustrade, so she can say, ‘Won't ye please ca', Mr. Haynes?’ ”

"Elder, when you fish for trout, do you expect anyone to ask, 'Shall I bring you the trout on a platter?' ere you get your rod together and your tackle hung?"

Slapping me on the back, he cried, "Lad, ye'll do. But get the rod jointed an' the tackle hung, quick."

The General Assembly was organized next day. Dr. Sandwich was not chosen moderator. Everything moved in what I have since learned is the cut-and-dried way. But there was one feature which only Grandview could give: that was the Saturday afternoon excursion to West Point by boat, and the return by moonlight. Joe Smith had come down from Greenton, bringing Helen, of course; and Dr. and Mrs. Fraser, with Joe and Helen for aids, had planned the whole affair. Whatever these four undertook was sure to be well done, and probably no General Assembly ever had a more hilarious time than was ours that afternoon after the battalion drill of the cadets was done, and the commissioners and their hosts, the Grandview ladies, had sat down to a basket lunch. Alice Leavenworth, Helen, Joe and I had our lunch together. In the midst of the good time, Helen, turning abruptly to me, said:

"Joe tells me you are to speak to-morrow night."

"Yes, Mr. Henderson is to blame for that, I suppose."

"Where will you speak?" asked the maid of honor.

"At the Assembly church," I answered. "They call the night 'Experience Night,' and I'm to tell the story of the Greenton revival."

"Oh, I'm glad," said Helen. "Out of that revival came my Joe and all my happiness."

"Will your preparation keep you from the mission in the afternoon?" inquired the maid of honor.

"No, I think not," was my answer.

"Then I'm glad," said she, "for I want you to see Tom. You men in the Assembly seem so busy that I was beginning to fear you would not see Tom at all."

As we were talking, David Henderson passed. "Engaged, Dominie, I doot. If ye're no, I wad talk wi' ye."

"No, I'm not engaged," I answered.

"Come awa', then. But, Alice, lass, ere I go, will ye have an old man's escort to the great meetin' the morrow nicht? There'll be guid speakin', I doot." She accepted his courtesy, and having excused myself, I went away with Henderson.

I saw no more of the maid of honor until just before starting for Grandview. Then, to my amazement, she was walking toward the boat landing with Bruce Fraser. As we met he gave a careless nod, but she passed without a sign of recognition.

There was no more peace for me. When we landed at Grandview, I saw him take the maid of honor in a carriage and disappear in the darkness.

To say I had a sleepless night would be false. No care, no sorrow could keep the gentle goddess from folding me to her breast when the hour for her sway had come.

Sunday afternoon was spent partly at the mission, and partly in walking home with Tom, who had improved in a very noticeable manner. He would not yet talk much, but it was very plain that he appreciated the things that had been done for him. My talk to him was along the line of helping others. The story

of the man with one talent interested him greatly. "Jesus wants effort, Tom, not results," I said. "When He asks you some day, 'What did you do with your talent?' if you can say, 'I did my best,' He will say, 'Well done.' For, Tom, all that a man can do is his best and Jesus knows that."

He took that in, and was turning it over in his mind. But when I asked him if he would try to do his best for Jesus, he said, "I dunno," in a manner and tone which made me understand how that short answer had almost paralyzed the maid of honor.

She had been in the mission that afternoon, and I had been privileged to lead and to speak briefly. She had listened with a face that was unreadable. As Tom and I passed through the vestibule, where she had preceded us, I told her that I was going home with Tom. She answered, "I am glad of that. But shall we not see you at our house also? It would please mother greatly."

"Present my compliments to your mother. It will give me great pleasure to be in your home again. But my days are quite occupied, and I presume you attend the popular meetings in the evenings."

"I shall not go out to-morrow evening," she answered.

"No? Then I'll come to-morrow night," I said, and putting my arm through Tom's, walked away.

As I rose to speak that night, my eyes roved over the house in search of Henderson and the maid of honor, but they were hidden somewhere by one of the great stone columns. Major and Mrs. Ardmann were close to the platform, and they waited for me after the meeting ended. As I walked down the aisle, I passed

Bruce Fraser. To speak with him was only a gentleman's part.

"How's old Sinclair?" he asked.

"He was well at last reports."

"Mrs. Sinclair didn't seem to have much luck trying to tie you to her maid of honor, did she?" There was a sneer in his tone, and beer on his breath.

"I don't understand you," I said.

"Oh, yes, you do. Do you suppose anyone will believe that story you told to-night?"

"Yes, every man that knows me will believe it," I answered.

"Well, I know you, and I don't believe it."

"I'm sorry you don't believe it, but none the less it is true. Don't let's quarrel, Mr. Fraser."

"All right. You keep away from the Terrace and we won't," he said, and slipped away into the night.

As I went through the vestibule, a familiar voice said:

"Ye're too proud wi' your fine talk to look at ordinary mortals, I doot." Turning, I confronted the Scotchman and the girl.

"I hope you are not too very tired," she said. "But if you are, the address was worth the cost."

Sleep was hard to woo that night, but she yielded to me at last, and as we went together into dreamland, a gentle voice seemed to say, "But if you are, the address was worth the cost."

XXV

PERIL SURPRISES LOVE

THAT Monday night was clear, warm, balmy, with fragrance of lilacs and May flowers on the air. The eastern veranda of Mrs. Leavenworth's home commanded a full view of the river and mountains. To that veranda we went presently, and under the witchery of the moonlight all formality vanished, and the conversation flowed now smoothly, now rippling with laughter.

Our talk turned to the drives about Grandview. Mr. Richard Leavenworth advised me not to leave the city without a sight of the beautiful surrounding country. "You may never see this locality at close range again," he said. To take his cue was easy.

"Nothing could be more enjoyable," I declared. "If I can get an afternoon for such pleasure, I surely will. Of course you have good horses in Grandview."

"Oh, yes; good horses, fine, the summer people make that necessary."

"Well, then, Mrs. Leavenworth, shall I have the pleasure of a drive with you and Miss Leavenworth? I will be glad to have you show me this lovely country."

"Mr. Haynes, there are two parts to your question," the mother answered. "To one of them I can reply very quickly. But first I must ask another. Are you familiar with horses?"

"Ask Mr. Henderson," I replied. "He has had me

for driver. I am, or was, a country lad, and Greenton is famous for its horses."

"Then," said she, "I can answer my part of your question easily. I am too old to bear so long a drive as you young people might like to take. So I think I must decline. But my daughter can answer for herself."

Whereupon I turned to the maid of honor. "Miss Leavenworth," I said, "will you act as escort for me for a drive, some afternoon?"

"Yes, I will be escort, if you wish," she said, emphasizing "escort." So I set Saturday for the drive.

After that our conversation drifted along until by some chance it touched on the scenes of the Civil War. Mrs. Leavenworth was a good talker. She told how her two sons had been soldiers. The elder, Richard, had survived the war. Turning to him I said, "You must have had many thrilling experiences."

"Yes, we did indeed." And then with deep earnestness he gave the story of the Peninsular campaign and the Seven Days' battles.

Then the mother took up the story of her captain son. A New York physician, when the war broke out he volunteered, raised a company, and was chosen captain. Down in the trenches in the swamp-lands of the Chickahominy, the captain had fallen ill of the dread fever that ever hung on the flanks of that devoted Potomac Army. Down into the exposure and horror of the camp this gentle woman had gone, to battle with death for the life of her youngest son. She had won in that fight, and carried her captain home to Grandview. There on that very veranda, while May and June days passed all too swiftly, the

captain regained his strength. The furlough ended, he went back to the front. The fierce fighting around Fredericksburg came on, and Burnside's mine was sprung, with awful disaster to our troops. Among the names of the thousands of those who there were sacrificed, was that of Captain John Leavenworth. The mother had snatched his life from the jaws of disease, only to have it snatched from her again in the moment of her happiness over her victory.

"Mr. Haynes," she said, "people call me unpatriotic and hardened in spirit, because I say I hate that war. I hate the memory of it. I hate the men who made it, north and south. But I am a patriot; I love my country; I love the soldiers; I cannot see one but I long to put my arms around him. When Memorial Day comes next week, I shall hang the old flag from my window, and shall think with loyal love of the dead. I shall help lay flowers upon the graves of soldiers who are buried here. But I hate war. I shall never cease to hate war."

When Mrs. Leavenworth stopped talking, silence fell upon us all. Alice Leavenworth was weeping. But she was the one who finally broke the silence. "Pardon me, Mr. Haynes," she said, "for having asked you to call, and then allowing the conversation to take so sad a turn. It is no doubt the influence of the approach of Memorial Day. It always makes us sad. It is the holiest day, and the saddest, of the year. And now tell me what you think of Tom."

I answered, glad for the opportunity to talk with her about present-day matters.

"I think there's something in Tom that can be saved. He's by no means the Tom he was when I

found him, five months ago. He says 'I dunno,' yet, but that's not a sign of incapacity, but of diffidence and inertia."

Her next question was a hard one. "Do you think he is any better?"

"Better than what?" was my evasive answer. "Have you ever seen any evidence that he is, or has been, bad? Measuring him against other boys in the mission, is he worse than they?"

"No—oh, no; not so bad as most," was her reply. "I've never heard him swear. He has never been ill-tempered. At his home he is helpful beyond all expectation."

"Well, then," I asked again, "better than what?"

"I see—I see," she made reply. "'Better' was not the correct word. But is he—would you say he was in a more hopeful condition?"

"Yes, I certainly should," I was glad to be able to say. "You have accomplished much with that poor boy."

"Do you think so? I wish I could know surely that he would one day love Jesus Christ."

"You will know. A day will come when he will do something that will make you know. Wait. Work. Be hopeful."

"Thank you," she said gently, as I rose to go. "That is a great comfort." I left the ladies sitting yet upon the veranda. Mr. Leavenworth went with me to the hall below. "You must pardon my mother," he said. "The war went very hard with her."

"No apology is needed for such a woman," was my reply. "Women like her did almost as much to save the Union as you soldiers, Mr. Leavenworth."

"That's so, Mr. Haynes. That's so." And at parting he gave me a very hearty shake of the hand.

* * * * *

There must have been a ball and chain attached to the feet of Old Father Time, for the next four days moved more slowly than any others in all my life. But Saturday afternoon came at last, and at two o'clock a carriage and a pair of horses were waiting on Morningside Terrace, at Mrs. Leavenworth's door. The young lady was all ready. Her mother called from the porch as we were starting, "Be careful how you drive, Mr. Haynes: and Alice, go up the river first. That will be pleasantest."

What a drive that was! There was no dust. Long stretches of river now, and presently a bit of woodland through which the road wound in shade, down vistas that would wake the romance in a soul even if it were asleep, then up the long hill through Marlboro, and past the white church, we drove. Then westward and southward, out to Fowler's Lake, where under the trees by the shore we tied the horses and left them while we wandered along the bank. On an old mossy log the maid of honor sat down, while I stood out by the edge of the water, skipping stones. I saw fish break beyond the weeds along the margin, and though I knew they were not trout, they made me think of Henderson, and I asked the first question that came to my mind.

"Do you know Mr. Henderson well?"

I did not look toward her as she answered, nor did I venture nearer to that log. There was danger in its vicinity, for a man so madly in love as I was. I was not ready to tell the girl that I loved her. Henderson

had badgered me about her for three years. What he had said to her about me, or what he had told Julia to say, I had no means of knowing. So, when I spoke of him, I dared not look at her, lest I should see in her face something that might lead me to make a hazard prematurely.

Her reply was simple enough :

"Not so very well—well enough to know that he is queer, and well enough to know that he is heartily devoted to you."

A little bolder by reason of the answer, I asked, "Does he speak of me so much, then?"

"Oh, I don't see him much," she replied. "At his home, when Julia was married, he was chanting your praises continually. I thought Mr. Ardman—not the Major—felt piqued that Mr. Henderson should show so much more interest in you than in him."

I had stopped skipping stones when this little colloquy began, and, gathering courage, approached the maid of honor's log.

"May I sit down?" I asked. She moved a trifle to make room for me. "Did Mr. Henderson ever tell you his trout story, and of his day on Greenton River?" I asked.

"No," she responded; "what was it?"

"I think, if you'll excuse me, I'll leave for you the pleasure of his version of a very funny incident."

"But I may not see him again," she objected. "You told me the Assembly would adjourn Monday, and you have wakened my curiosity."

"Oh, you'll see him again. There's too much old-fashioned politeness about him, for him to leave Grandview without saying good-bye to your mother. Get him to tell you then. Tell him I told you to."

"Well," she answered, "I will. But do you know him well? So very well?"

"Yes, I know him better than I know any other man, save only Tim Wendell and Joe Smith."

"Who is Mr. Wendell?" she asked. "Of course I know Mr. Smith. But why do you call one 'Tim,' and the other 'Joe'? Is that the ministerial way, with the men of their congregations? Will you call Mr. Henderson 'Dave,' by and by?"

"Call Mr. Henderson 'Dave'? Well, hardly!" and I stopped talking to laugh. "If I should address him so, he would roar back, 'Hoot, man, wi' your Daves. I'm David to Geordie Ardman, but to no ither man.' And for the other questions, there are only three men in the world whom I call familiarly by their nicknames: Harry Sinclair and Tim and Joe. Harry was my college chum for four years. Joe was my classmate and my fraternity brother, and on one or two occasions was my champion. And Wendell? He's the best man in Greenton and my most trusted counselor."

"How did you make Mr. Henderson's acquaintance?"

"Has he never told you?"

"No," she responded. "You must remember he lives a long way from Grandview. I have been his guest only once, and then we were all busy with Julia's wedding. He was never in our house until he called to take me to that 'Experience Evening.'"

"Well, as he hasn't told you, I will. Do you remember the day after the wedding at old St. David's?"

"I can never forget it." Her reply was low, but I heard it.

"Homeward bound that afternoon," I continued, "I dropped into the only empty seat in the coach, beside a man who was studying a Bible and making notes. I watched him too closely, or too curiously, for his liking—perhaps he thought I was staring." I chanced that shot, but she did not flinch. "Whatever he thought, he turned on me. His first speech was the key-note of our acquaintance."

"What train were you on?" she said. "You were bound for New York, of course."

"Yes," I said, "I was going to New York, and was on the two o'clock train."

"You were?" Her question was quick and rather astonished. "Why, I was on that same train."

It was my turn to say, "You were?" So I said it like an actor, adding, "I didn't see you alight in Jersey City."

"No," she said. "I left the train in Newark. My brother Dick lived in Newark then."

"Yes, I learned that afterward. For a long time I thought you lived in Newark, too. I didn't know till that night on your porch with Julia, that you didn't."

"Yes, I remember. Poor Mary! Mary was Dick's wife, you know."

"How long since her death?" I asked, as innocently as though Harry Sinclair had never written about it.

"It was in the summer after that Adirondack ride. She took cold that night. It ended in pneumonia. That was an awful ride."

How long that conversation would have continued I make no conjecture. What course it might have taken, because of that last remark, is not history. The maid of honor started up suddenly, saying, "My

watch says four o'clock. We must be off, or late to dinner. I told mother you would dine with us to-night. You will, won't you?"

"Yes, with pleasure," I said, and went to unhitch the horses.

Down the road toward Grandview we whirled, talking but little. The horses sniffed the home barns, and though I had driven many teams, I had never driven one that kept me more on the alert than this one. I wanted no accidents, so I gave them my entire attention. A half mile out of Grandview, I stopped the horses under a great elm, in a triangle where three roads met. The animals needed rest. They stood with heaving sides, breathing and cooling, ere I let them take just a taste of the water in a roadside trough. While we were waiting, Miss Leavenworth spoke once more of Tom, asking me what I supposed the touch of her life and his could possibly mean, and what the end would be?

I did not answer at once. Instead, I drew a clipping from my letter-case, a little gem of poetry that I prized.

"I think this will answer your question. Your relation to Tom is one of the foreordained things. Men call them chance, but devotion calls them God. May I read it to you? I think there's time."

"Oh, yes, do, please," she answered.

So I began:

"A fire-mist and a planet,
A crystal and a cell;
A jelly-fish and a saurian,
And caves where the cave-men dwell;
Then a sense of law and beauty,
And a face turned from the clod —
Some call it evolution,
And others call it God.

“A haze on the far horizon,
The infinite tender sky ;
The ripe, rich tints of the cornfields,
And the wild geese sailing high ;
And all over upland and lowland,
The charm of the golden-rod —
Some of us call it Autumn,
And some of us call it God.

“Like the tide on a crescent sea-beach
When the moon is new and thin,
Into our hearts high yearnings
Come welling and surging in —
Come from the mystic ocean
Whose rim no foot has trod —
Some of us call it Longing,
And some of us call it God.

“A picket frozen on duty,
A mother starved for her brood,
Socrates drinking the hemlock,
And Jesus on the rood ;
And millions who, humble and nameless,
The straight, hard pathway trod —
Some call it Consecration,
And others call it God.”

“Oh, that is beautiful, Mr. Haynes, and so helpful.”
That was all she said—but her face was shining.

I gave the horses the water, and drove them leisurely down the wide street. It was almost six o'clock. As we jogged along, I heard an uproar behind me, and suddenly a cry, “Way there, mister! Way there! You'll be run down.”

Looking backward, I saw, a hundred yards away, a big team running wildly. They had no driver and were dragging a heavy dray, dashing from side to side of the street, directly toward us. People, terrified, were fleeing for shelter behind projecting flights of stone steps.

"Way there, mister! way there!" came the cry. It was then that my country training stood me in good stead. To try to drive away, faster than they were coming, was useless. To try driving toward them and so avoid them, zigzagging as they were, was dangerous. The only thing was to stop, watch, and take my chances. I whirled my horses instantly at right angles to the street. The runaways were bearing directly down upon me. Alice Leavenworth sat like a statue, uttering no sound. When the maddened beasts were within thirty yards of us, and I saw they could not change their course, I gave my own horses a touch with the whip, sending them with a tremendous spring straight across the street, directly in front of the thundering dray, and we were safe.

There was a great cheer from the crowd. The move had been made just in time. Where my carriage had been thirty seconds before, that runaway pair dashed, striking a small tree with the huge hub of a hind wheel, and snapping it off; then on they tore, down the street. Our danger and escape had been so quick that I could scarcely realize it.

Turning about once more, I followed the course of the dray. Miss Leavenworth had not yet spoken a word. Looking at her, I noticed that her eyes were fixed on the street beyond, across which, just then, a little boy was seen to run, directly into the track of the wild horses. That he would be run down and killed seemed inevitable; yet, in all the horror of the moment, to turn my eyes away was impossible. But quicker than the horses, out from the throng there dashed a man to where the boy had fallen, seized him, pulled him with a swift swing of his arm out of danger, and then, as if made dizzy by his own act, he faltered

just a second, staggered, fell in front of the team, and horses and dray passed over his prostrate form. Never before had I seen a thing so horrible. As we drove up, the little boy was sitting in the road; in his lap lay the head of the man. Like a flash the truth went through me, and I tried to turn the horses backward. I was too late. The girl by my side clutched my arm with both her hands, crying:

“Jack! that’s Willie! And Jack! oh, Jack! that’s Tom!”

The meaning of that impassioned “Jack” went through my soul, as with shaking voice I answered:

“Yes, Alice dear, I know.”

For a moment she sobbed, while my arm went round her, holding her close. Then her strong soul asserted itself.

“Jack,” she said, “please help me out. Take the horses to the stable, and then come back for me.” This time there was no passion in her “Jack,” but rather a calm decision, and I knew that for her and for me the crisis of life had come. But all I said was:

“Yes, Alice.”

When I returned, she had attended to everything that needed to be done, and her brother was there with an ambulance. Tom was unconscious still. No one but the woman and the little boy had shown even the sympathy of tears for the brave man who had done what no other one had dared. They hurried the poor form to the city hospital. Mr. Leavenworth accompanied the ambulance, while I escorted Alice and the little boy home. I asked to be excused from making one at the dinner table, a request for which I could see that Alice was grateful. She went with me to the hall door.

"Your skill and courage saved my life," she said; "saved both our lives. And Tom, whom you found for me, saved Willie's life at the sacrifice of his own. How can I ever repay you?"

I took her extended hand, answering her question, "You can repay me with the life you say I have saved. You can let me watch over you, care for you, love you with all my soul while life shall last. Will you?"

"Yes," she answered, "I will."

Then that hall door was closed, but it did not shut me out. Which one closed it need not be told, nor what we did, nor how long we stood there. But the look she gave me as our covenant was made has never for one moment been forgotten.

I was not twenty yards from the gate when I met Bruce Fraser. "Good-evening," I said.

"Damn your good-evenings," he answered. "You made a fine spectacle of Miss Leavenworth this afternoon, didn't you? But I'll see that you and your ragamuffins annoy her no more."

"You need not trouble, Mr. Fraser," I answered. "I shall never annoy her again in this world, God helping me."

"I'm glad you've come to your senses," he said. "And if God don't help you, I know who will." He went on to the Leavenworths'.

My first effort at the Balustrade was to find Henderson, tell him of the incident that had so moved me, and arrange with him to go to the hospital, after we had dined. Ah, but he was a man with a great heart! He gave orders at the hospital to provide the best attention and skill for Tom, and agreed to meet the cost. Then he sent a carriage for Tom's mother,

while we both remained until she was by her boy's side. He left some money with her, and we returned to the hotel. For me, there was a promise to be kept; so, bidding him good-night, I made my way back to Morningside Terrace.

Alice took me straight to her mother.

The dear lady rose, and, extending her two hands, clasped mine in both of hers. "We can never repay you, Mr. Haynes," she said, "never."

"Yes, Mrs. Leavenworth," I said, "you can. If you and Alice will give me the life she says I saved, to love and to care for always, you will not only repay me, but you will make me inextricably your debtor. Will you?"

The mother looked steadily at me a moment, then turned to Alice, then looked back at me, repeating slowly, "Will I? Will I? Alice is my only daughter, Mr. Haynes, and—but, Alice,—is this your wish too?"

The maid of honor put her arm around her mother's waist.

"Yes, mother," she answered. The old lady kissed her; then, turning to me, said, "Then it is yes, Mr. Haynes, from both of us. Your name is John, is it not? John was my boy's name—my boy who died at Fredericksburg. You shall be John, for me and mine, from henceforth."

* * * * *

Alice sat with me on the veranda. The moon was full, and there was magic in the air. Neither of us ever had known such an evening as that. To stay long was impossible; the events of the day had been full of excitement, and in our hearts was unspoken

sorrow over the poor boy out of whose sacrifice we had come to the mutual knowledge of our love for each other. Just before I said good-night, I asked:

“Alice dear, was Bruce Fraser here to-night?”

“Yes,” she answered, “he came in just after you had gone. He was all broken up over our narrow escape this afternoon. Bruce and I have been friends so long, he seems to feel that anything that affects me affects him.”

“Did he say anything about me?”

“Yes. He had been misinformed about the accident. He laid it all to your bungling driving. I told him how it was.”

“Did you tell him about our relations?”

“No. He was excited, and if he ever drank, I should think he had been drinking. He only staid a short time.”

“You would better tell him, Alice, the next time he comes.”

“Do you wish it, Jack dear?”

“Yes,” I said.

Next morning, Sunday, summoned me to the hospital; Alice and Dick and Willie were already there. She could not be satisfied with sending to learn of Tom’s condition, so herself had gone early, with Dick and the boy for escort. Seeing that the poor fellow’s end was approaching, she rightly thought I would wish to be there.

Tom had remained unconscious all the night, but with the morning the soul came back to its shattered temple. The eyes opened for one last look on the world, and the tongue was loosed to say its last words until in the company of the redeemed it should take up the new song, “unto Him who hath loved us and

hath washed us from our sins in His own blood." That the pardon which Christ had bought was Tom's, I knew before I had stood many moments by his cot. A strange beauty shone from his face. His eyes roved over the unaccustomed place, and the comforts of it seemed to satisfy him. He knew us all but Richard Leavenworth. Sometimes, as I have thought of his last moments, I have wondered if he did not think he was at the portals of heaven.

His eyes sought our faces, looking lovingly at his mother and at Alice. Poor mother! There lay all that remained of him who for so long had been almost her sole support. What would she do now? What do any of the poor do? They are always with us, and how little we reck of them.

There was nothing stolid in that poor upturned face now. Coarseness was there, but not because of sin; it was the mark of hardship and poverty. Haggardness was there, but not because of debauchery; it was laid there by the hand of calamity.

He turned his face to his mother. Falteringly, brokenly, he said:

"Mother—the Lord—will—provide."

His eyes sought Alice's face.

"Teacher," he began, but the words came slowly and feebly, "'Inasmuch as—ye—hev—done it—unto one of the least of—these—My—brethren—ye hev—done it—unto Me.' I—pulled Willie out o' the way—fer Him."

There followed moments of silence. Only his breathing told us that he had not gone. Then at last he roused himself, trying to speak again. This time he looked at me. The voice was very faint and low, and the words were very far apart.

"Though—I—am—poor and needy—yet—the Lord—thinketh—upon me!" Then silence—utter silence. Not a quiver, not a sigh. The light was out. Poor Tom no more! Stolid Tom no more! Redeemed Tom—redeemed by the blood of the Lamb!

Alice turned to me. "He's gone, Jack." There was a moment's pause, then she went on, "And we are here. Reward for him, work for us—and, God helping, we will do our work together."

After another moment's silence, she asked, with a break in her voice:

"Do you know what those last words to us all were? They were Golden Texts from his lessons in the mission school. And that last text of all—that was the Golden Text of that very first Sunday, when I felt keenly the sense of my unutterable failure."

"God is good, Alice," I said gently. "He has given you the fruitage of your labors in His own time."

We laid Tom away in Fernvale Cemetery. Henderson and Major Ardman chose the spot and met the cost, and they placed there a stone on which was carved:

"**Tom.**

*The World Gave Him No Chance,
but
JESUS CHRIST DID.*"

And Henderson's loving kindness did not stop there. While the mother lived, the mill superintendent paid her Tom's wages every week, and Henderson knew what was the cause.

XXVI

LOVE'S CONFESSION

THE General Assembly adjourned. Its members scattered. Mr. Henderson left me in Grandview, saying in farewell, "Business will keep me frae hame for yet a few days, an' ye need to get your bearings before ye start, or we'll never see ye in Duqueboro, I doot. There's naethin' like a lassie to straighten oot a man as daft as ye are. Spend a day or twa wi' the queen. She'll righten ye. Then come hame. Ye ken the way."

"I shall go too, to-morrow," I answered, "but not home. I'm going to Greenton first, but I'll be home before Sunday."

"An' what are ye goin' to Greenton for? Is that Jim Garvey in it? Hoot, man! wi' your Greentons an' your Garveys, an' that girl only juist got ye. Ye're ungratefu' to her an' to me, wi' your Greentons an' your Garveys."

He shook my hand and was gone. The rest of the day and evening was spent on the Terrace.

Oh, that last night with Alice under the May moon, with the glistening river lying there below, and the laughter and song from the boats floating up as accompaniment to the low hum of our voices. We had been sitting, as lovers do, with no spoken word, enjoying the deeper, lovelier communion of silence, when the dear girl said suddenly:

"Did you tell Mr. Henderson of our engagement?"

"No," I replied. "It wasn't necessary. He told me."

"Told you? How could he?" was her puzzled inquiry.

"Don't you know Henderson yet? Joe Smith told him once he was a wizard, and I think he is—a Scotch wizard."

"Yes, but how did he know?"

"Oh, by his wizarding. He watched me, I suppose. He's a lawyer, and reading men's faces is his profession. Anyway, on Monday after Tom's funeral he said to me, 'So ye've come to your senses, I doot,' and when I asked him when I'd been away from them, 'Hoot, man,' said he, 'ye've been oot o' your senses ever since I knew ye. Ye've loved the girl three years, an' she's loved ye three years, an' ye never went near her till I trapped ye an' landed ye at Grand-view, an' ye've been blunderin' ever since then, till noo.' And you should have seen his satisfaction when he added, 'But it's a' settled noo. An' I congratulate ye, lad; I congratulate ye. A man does a great thing when he comes to his senses aboot the woman he loves.'"

Alice's laugh was music to me, for she had been very sad over Tom. When the ripple passed, she said:

"Is that true? Have you loved me for three years?"

She need not have asked; I had told her that before. But I answered as if I had not.

"I have loved you ever since that night when, coming down the broad stairs at the Wayne Mansion, I saw you and Phyllis Lorraine standing in the hall below."

"Do you know, Jack—I knew it that night, that very night."

"How could I know you did?" was my frank reply. "You wouldn't let me near enough to see what you did or did not know."

"That's true," she answered gently. "I wouldn't—can't you imagine why?"

"No," I returned; "it's beyond the most vivid flight of my fancy. Why was it?"

"Well—" and she hesitated a trifle; "well—I loved you that very night, and I didn't want to." The words fairly tumbled over her lips. "So I wouldn't have had you know it for worlds."

"Why, Alice Leavenworth!" I cried in amazement, "do you mean to say that you fell in love with me that night—with me?"

"Yes—that night—with you—as you came down those stairs."

Thereafter ensued a long silence on the veranda.

When I spoke next, it was to say, "Why didn't you want me to know you loved me, Alice?" I was returning to the subject that interested me most.

"Do you suppose any girl likes to wear a sign for the man she loves, to read? Besides, I had said over and over that I'd never marry a preacher. Phyllis had been teasing me about you, prophesying that I'd be an easy victim to your charms. She had never seen you, but Harry had told her about you, and she thought she was a wonderful judge of men, though I can't say much for her taste in choosing Mr. Sinclair."

"Then you meant to keep Phyllis ignorant as well as me?" I asked.

"You reason well from the premises," was her laughing reply, and her laugh was joyous and clear.

"You're a fine actress, Alice," I answered, more fascinated than ever with her charm. "A fine actress. Neither Phyllis nor Harry nor I ever suspected the facts. At Mr. Henderson's house one night, when he was bragging that he would marry me to the most beautiful girl in the world, Harry said to him, 'You've taken a big contract. I tried to start a game of that sort at old St. David's, but the game wouldn't go. The girl I had there for him was the most beautiful girl in the world, and the two looked at each other without the slightest interest. I think each of them was bored because each had to put up with the other for two whole days. Phyllis and I were sadly disappointed.'"

"We both know of whom Harry was talking," she said. "But who," she added archly, "was the lady Mr. Henderson spoke of?"

"Why, you," said I. "Who else? They both had you in mind. Henderson knew it, though Harry didn't."

"There's been quite a game played around me, of which I knew nothing."

"Nothing, Alice? Are you sure?" I questioned.

"Well, not much of anything. Nothing until Julia's visit. After you'd gone home, and your letter about Tom came, Julia teased me some, but she didn't learn one syllable of my secret."

There was another little interval of silence that was not tedious. The moon was very bright, the river was very beautiful, and neither of us had ever been engaged before. Finally, as before, I broke the spell:

"Alice, may I ask you something without danger of making you angry?"

"Why, yes, dear. What could you say to anger me?"

"Well, I might say a right thing in a way so wrong and blundering as to annoy you, if I didn't rouse your anger. But I'll risk it, anyway." Then, boldly, "Do you remember the day you and Felix Ardman were on Fifth avenue, before Schaus' window?"

Her reception of the question surprised me. "I've been wanting you to ask me that very thing," she said. "I knew you would sometime. I wanted to tell you about that, but I couldn't bring myself to take the initiative. I said a horrid thing, and I knew it. But, Jack, I loved you that day, and the sight of you roused a struggle in me that I thought I had fought all out before. I saw you before you saw me. When you did see me, I wished the earth would open. I was angry to think I loved you. I almost gave you the heartiest welcome you ever had; but, had I done that, Felix Ardman would have known, for I could not have kept it concealed. I said in my heart, 'I will not love him—I will not marry him,' and my only defense was in brusque repellence of your look. I called it a stare, and you heard and rushed out among the carriages, and I thought you would be killed. When I saw you safe on the top of that stage, I offered a prayer of thanks, for I did love you, Jack, and I do. I never would have married anyone else. I said I would never marry you, but I will, Jack—I will."

Then after a little I said, "And that tells the story of *The Westernland*, too, I suppose?"

"Yes, Jack. It was almost more than I could bear, to have you on that steamer—to have to see you for ten days. That night when you nearly tumbled over me, and blazed out so at me, I almost broke down.

Had you just there declared that you had followed me because you loved me, I think I should have accepted you."

"Do you remember the day you met Mr. Harris in Rome?"

"Yes, I remember. He told us you were in Rome. I wished I could have a sight of you that day. We told him where we were going, and when. I thought perhaps you would be about the station somewhere."

"But I told you I would never see you again unless it were by accident."

"Yes, I know. But I thought perhaps you might have an accident happen, you know." That remark was the signal for another lull in the conversation. Finally the girl said :

"Who is Mr. Harris, Jack?"

"He is a wealthy Boston merchant who goes abroad often. He and Mr. Henderson have been friends for six years. When Henderson started me for Europe, he induced Mr. Harris to go, so that I might have a traveling mate. I did not know the man nor the fact. Harris scraped acquaintance with me, and it developed that he was my second cousin. I didn't learn Henderson's part in his being with me till I first went to Duqueboro, and David, Jr., told me."

"Jack, I'm going to tell you something stranger still. Mr. Henderson knows Richard well, in a business way, and knew that he was going abroad on *The Westernland*. A week before it was to sail, he went into the store in Newark and asked Dick if he were going to take me along. He seemed so determined about it, Dick finally agreed, if he could get room for me. Then Mr. Henderson told him he had a room that he couldn't use, and wouldn't we take it? That's

how I happened to be a passenger. He did that just to get you and me together, did he not?"

"Yes, that's transparent. But it didn't work."

"Jack, it worked better than you thought. I told myself a hundred times a day, 'I hate that man,' and at night I went to sleep saying, 'I love him, oh, I do love him, and why does he not see it?'"

It was hard to say good-bye that night. But it had to be said. I passed out into the night. Alice was at the unclosed door.

I turned to look back from the gate. There she stood as on that December night when Henderson's finesse had brought me in ignorance to her home. She was the maid of honor then: she was my maid of honor now, my affianced bride. I see her still, after all the years, tall, graceful, inexpressibly beautiful, her hand raised to her lips, and her face suffused with love.

XXVII

A VISIT TO OLD FRIENDS

AT half-past one next day, Joe Smith and I were whirling along the Greenton River road to Salisbury. Our destination was the county jail. The sheriff recognized me, comprehended my errand, and volunteered the information that "my man was bracing up." "The gin is all out of him long ago," he said. "He begins to look white. He says himself he's going to stop chewing tobacco, but I'm afraid that would kill him. I thought when you left him, you were wasting your sympathy; but you're not. I thought he was a hobo, but he isn't. He'll win out."

The sheriff turned me over to a keeper, who brought Jim out to see us. It hardly seemed possible that my eyes told the truth when he appeared. There was before me the figure of an erect man, instead of a slouched-down hulk of a bummer. Walking up, he said :

"Mr. Haynes, you're the best man I ever see. There's not another in your class."

"Oh, yes, there are, Jim, lots of them," I said. "But I don't much think there is another to be found easily of your class. You've made the most rapid advance toward manhood of any man I ever saw. You know I told you there was a man in you, and I think he's beginning to come out."

"Yes, I guess he's getting out, Mr. Haynes. But you opened the door."

"Well, Jim, an open door's no good if a man won't use it. Your keeper tells me you're going to give up chewing tobacco, Jim. Is that so?"

"Yes, sir, it's so."

"Do you think you can stand out, Jim?"

"Yes, sir, I think I can."

"My boy, I'm afraid you don't know how hard it's sure to be." I saw my opportunity here for the word I had come to Salisbury to say. "You'll want Jesus Christ along, if you break that habit."

"Hold up, Mr. Haynes," he cried then. "I ain't on to that racket yet. I'll get there—only don't go too fast. I'm goin' after Jesus Christ jes' as soon as I c'n catch on."

Poor fellow! How little he knew! How low down he was. There were little lights of God visible in him that day in the county jail.

"Jim," I continued, "you won't drink the day you get out?"

"Not a drop, so help me, parson."

"Jimmie MacNaughton will be here that day. You'll go with him, won't you?"

"Go with any feller you say go with."

"He'll take you to Bob. I'm going to see Bob to-night. He'll have work ready for you, work that you can do, and he's been through the whole mill himself. He knows every cog in every wheel of the whole gin machine."

"All right, Mr. Haynes; that's where I'll go."

So much settled, I returned to the centre of the problem.

"See here, Jim," I said, "you'll go down on the

under side of things again, where you said you'd always been, you know, if you don't take Jesus Christ into your life."

"Well, where is He, parson? Gimme a sight o' Him." I could see the poor fellow was in earnest. "If I c'n get hold o' Him, I will," he promised. "So help me, I will."

"Let's go back to your cell, Jim." I called the keeper. "Mr. Smith and I want to see Jim in his cell," I explained. "We want you along to see that we don't load him up for a break."

When we were all back in the cell, I said:

"Jim, you've been a drunkard and a liar and a thief. You know, don't you, that Jesus Christ was crucified for sinners?"

"Yes: the priest told that yarn, when I was a kid."

"He did all that for you—just for you. He'll forget that you've been liar and thief and drunkard, if you'll tell Him so and ask Him to forget it, and ask Him to come and go along with you. There was a thief on a cross right beside Him, that day He died. He got a notion that Christ could help him, even if He was on the cross there. So he asked Him not to forget him when He should enter His kingdom, and Jesus told him right there He'd take him to Paradise that very day. Don't you think, if He'd help one thief like that, He'd help another who asked Him?"

"Twouldn't be fair, if He didn't," said Jim.

"Well, I've come up here from Grandview—that's almost as far as Sing Sing—just to get you to promise me that you'd ask Jesus Christ every day not to forget you. Will you do it?"

"Well—I can't catch on to her much—but I'll do her."

"Will you do it to-day, Jim?"

"When?"

"Now. Get down on your knees and do it now."

Down he went on the jail floor. His prayer was such as no one ever heard before.

"Jesus Christ, I'm goin' ter be a man. I hev quit gin, an' I'm goin' ter quit terbacker. I ain't onter this racket yet—but I'm goin' ter quit, an' don't yer fergit me. Amen."

Then Joe Smith prayed, and I followed. After that, we left the jail. In the corridor, the keeper said:

"Do you go around doing that sort of thing?"

"No," I answered, "that's my first. But that man must be saved. Whether you're a Christian or not, you should be, and I wish you'd take hold of this end of the job. I'm away off in Duqueboro when I'm at home, but I'll keep hold out there. Some one will come over from Greenton every month, and if you'll take hold here, we'll save this fellow, between us. He never had a friend in all his life before."

"Who are you?" inquired the keeper, who was newly come to Salisbury.

I told him.

"Well," said he, thoughtfully—and I was glad that the interview with Jim had, as I intended, set another man to thinking—"well, I'll go you half on your job. I'm a Christian—not much on it; not much—but I'll take a hand at this."

* * * * *

There was a very happy party at the manse that night. The good time began with dinner, to which Helen Raymond had invited her uncle and aunt. What joy it was, to sit with those blessed people in

the old dining-room of the only home I had known for many a year ! As I looked upon the familiar furniture, I thought, "By and by you will be in another home of mine, and a lady you have never known will care for you and watch over you." As that conceit took form, it almost seemed as if my mother's picture over the mantel smiled.

Elder Harfis was a reticent man ordinarily, but his tongue ran like a mill-race that night. He was persistent in questions about the Assembly and in comments upon it. At last Joe broke into the conversation,—"Where's your cigar, Jack?"

"Got a divorce from me on the ground of desertion," I said.

"Have you deserted the shrine of the little brown roll?" he asked.

"Yes," I answered. I wanted Joe to drop that subject, but he would not.

"How did it happen, Jack?"

"You know Major Ardman?"

"Yes."

"He's been a smoker for fifty years."

"Well, what of that?"

"He offered me a cigar at his house, the first night I was in Duqueboro. I said, 'Major, Mr. Henderson has given up cigars. I'm starting a new life here. Let's celebrate the beginning of this pastorate by following that good example.' 'Can't do it, Mr. Haynes; I'm too old,' he said. But he didn't light his cigar. He held it, twirled it, smelled it, laid it back in the box, shut the lid, wrapped it in paper, tied it fast, and said, 'Take that with my compliments to Dr. Sinclair.' He has never smoked since. Neither have I. But, Joe, where's your own cigar?"

"Oh," he replied, "when I returned to Greenton, Tim Wendell came to me and said, 'Dominie, tobacco is a dead damage to influence in this town. It hurt Jack some, while he was here. His tobacco was the reason why Charlie Hazeltine never joined our church, even though his father did. Now,' he said, 'you start right, and let that be one of the things you don't do here. If Henderson could stop, old and tough as he was, surely you can.' So I stopped, Jack."

"That's so—he did," came a familiar voice, and there in the door stood Wendell himself, who had entered unnoticed.

"Helen," I said, "will you pardon me if I suggest that Tim go and bring Mrs. Wendell?"

"Certainly," was the answer. "Hurry up, Mr. Wendell. We shall be curious to hear Jack's story."

When Tim returned with his wife, I told the tale of my long love for Alice Leavenworth, that I had won her and was to be married in September. The effect of this narrative on Joe was to make him forget that he was pastor of the Greenton Church, and that two of his elders were present. For a moment he was a boy again, back in the old fraternity lodge. Jumping up, he broke into one of the old lodge songs into which there came the name of a girl called Alice.

"Stop that, Joe," I shouted, "or I'll —" But he kept right on.

"Stop," I called again, and this time went after him, while the whole company began to laugh and cheer. Joe dodged to the other side of the library table, still singing, while the laughter grew louder. As we dodged this way and that on opposite sides of the barrier, a familiar voice arrested us.

"An' what are ye doin', dancin' like David before

the ark, I doot?" Only one man in the world would have said that. Joe stopped stock still.

"Avaunt, and quit my sight," he cried, throwing up his hands like Macbeth in the play. "Take any form but that. Be thou spirit of health or goblin —"

"Hoot, man, wi' your speerits an' your goblins! Have ye no welcome for the man that discovered ye an' introduced ye to civil society?"

We were all laughing heartily, but Helen controlled herself enough to act her part of hostess.

"You're very welcome indeed, Mr. Henderson," said she, offering him her hand. "And I'm ashamed of Mr. Smith."

"Oh, there's no need to be ashamed o' him, madam. He kens no better. A minister o' the gospel dancin' like Dauvid before the ark, an' no ark, an' no Dauvid but me, an' I'm no dancin'. Were there an ark, noo, one could forgie him."

"Oh, you'll forgive me when I tell you I was congratulating Haynes upon his engagement to the finest girl in the state."

"An' is it congratulatin' to sing unholy songs an' to caper to the confusion o' your elders?"

"Put yourself in my place, Mr. Henderson; put yourself in my place. I've been working for a year to make a match between these two, and I've just done it."

"Ye've dune it, ha' ye? Man! why, I brought 'em thegither. I made the plans. I started the train. I delivered the goods at the lassie's own door. An' ye say ye dune it? Man, where's your conscience?"

"There have been three sets of actors in this comedy," said I. "Harry Sinclair and Phyllis Lorraine

were the first. And Cupid was very alert and very effective at St. David's, I have lately learned. Joe Smith and his good wife, too, lent a helping hand in bringing matters to a happy outcome. But the king of the schemers was our friend. When Cupid brevets his aids for services well rendered, he will put a general's star on David Henderson's shoulder. Rise, friends, and salute the matchmaker from Duqueboro."

Every one rose amid a roar of laughter. Every one bowed. But Henderson was as sober as a judge as he said, "Ha' dune wi' your folly. Your gratitude is ower late in expression, man. But I wadna ha' succeeded but for the runawa', I doot." The next day Henderson and I started for home.

XXVIII

AN AWFUL NIGHT

AS Mr. Henderson and I neared Grandview, the longing to see Alice almost overpowered me. It was only an echo of my own thought when Henderson said suddenly, as the train was within sight of the town:

“Ye'll be stoppin' over yon, I doot.”

“Well, no, I guess not. I've said good-bye.”

“Man, what are ye made of? Is there no fire in ye? Are ye brass or copper, that the magnet over yon river doesna draw ye with tremendous drawin'?”

“No,” I said. “The drawing is all right. But we decided I wasn't to come back. We both knew I'd have to be busy in Duqueboro this summer, and couldn't be traveling back and forth. What would she think if I broke the agreement?”

“What would she think, is it? Oh, parson, ye're a grampus. Ye're a herrin'. Ye ken naething aboot girls. Stir yersel'. Leave me your luggage. Come down on the nine-thirty. Join me at the old Astor House. We'll take the midnight train. Have one good evenin'. Ye'll no hae another a' simmer.”

So I went over. “Nine-thirty, ye ken,” was his last word.

As I went into the Balustrade, a few minutes after six o'clock, I saw Bruce Fraser go into the wine-room with two others, swaggering and talking loud enough for me to hear.

"Yes, you old Muggins," he said, "I'm going up there now. I'm going to have it out to-night. I've been dancing to the tunes she's played for two years, and now we'll dance together or I'll know why."

It was a coarse speech, and I comprehended its full meaning. The man had evidently been drinking.

It was seven-thirty before I reached the Terrace. As I turned into the yard, Bruce was coming down the steps, and the door was shut behind him. He had not seen me at the Balustrade, but he could not help seeing me now.

"Hello, Dominie, best man, et cetera. What you doing here?" His breath was filled with the fumes of liquor.

"I'm on my way home to Duqueboro, from my old home at Greenton," I answered.

"Is this one of the way stations?" he asked with a sneer.

"Well, I've made it so to-night. I never expect to again, though."

"Well, you better not," he threatened. "I'm going to be boss at this station, and I'll kill the man who tries to get my job."

It was evident that something had gone wrong. It was of no use to talk to him so, slipping past, I went up the steps, while he, with a wicked oath, went off down the street.

Alice was overjoyed to see me again. She had more color than usual, and was a little excited. "Did you meet Bruce as you came in?" she asked.

"Yes, I met him."

"Did he speak to you? Did you notice anything peculiar about him?"

AN AWFUL NIGHT

323

“Yes he spoke. He was not quite so much the gentleman as he was at St. David’s,” I said.

“Oh, he’s changed horribly. You know, he worked for my brother in Newark. When Dick moved up here, he left Bruce in charge of his business. Dick goes down twice a week. Bruce had been very faithful, but he fell in with a fast set of men, and they have sadly demoralized him.”

“Did you know he drank too much punch at the old Wayne Mansion?”

“No,” was her reply.

“You were too busy trying to make me feel how utterly impossible I was that night,” I suggested.

“Stop, Jack. That’s all gone.”

“Did you know how it happened that Fraser went in one boat, your brother in another, and you two ladies in the third, when you went up Indian Lake from Locke’s that night?”

“No, how was it? Bruce and I expected to be in one boat.”

“I thought that was probable. I discovered that Fraser was drinking while we were walking in the rain. He had a flask in his pocket. When we stopped at Indian River Tavern, he slipped into the bar-room and drank hard again. Fearing for your safety, I told John Pike to make sure that the guides should load the boats just as they did.”

“Poor Bruce! I did like him, Jack. He was good company. He had enjoyed good advantages. I never loved him—never thought of such a thing; and to-night he horrified me.”

“What did he do to-night?” I knew well enough for I had overheard his remark at the Balustrade.

“He came here about seven o’clock, a most unusua

hour for him. He evidently was in liquor, and I was afraid. But happily he did not stay very long, for I called Dick."

"Did he do anything unusual?" I asked.

"Yes, he asked me to marry him, and said he had been trying to get an opportunity to say that for a long time, but that I had never been fair with him, and now he was going to make me hear, and he would not take no for an answer." She paused. She did not want to go any further, even to the man she loved, with the story of the rejection of the suit of the man she did not love. Her face was brilliant now with excitement, and she had never looked so entrancingly lovely.

"He made no trouble when you did say no, did he?"

"Oh," she answered, "he was a little dreadful, but I called Dick, and he went away. I have seen the last of him. I am sorry for his father, and I am more than sorry for him."

What an hour and a half we passed! To remember it even after all the years is happiness. Time went on the wings of love's young dream. Nine o'clock found us on the veranda, very loth to say our parting words. She was standing again in the doorway, and as I turned at the gate she said, "Be careful, Jack. Don't let anything happen."

"Nothing can happen," I said, and hastened down Bond street, and was just at the corner of Henry, when a man touched my arm from behind. I turned and was face to face with Bruce Fraser. "What do you want?" I said.

"I want you to read this paper and sign it," he answered.

"I have no time; I am hurrying to catch the nine-thirty Hudson River train south."

"You'll read and sign that, or you won't take any train," he replied. I could see he was filled with passion.

"Have done with this nonsense, Fraser," I said. "I want no quarrel with you. I'm in a hurry, too." I tried to avoid him, but as I stepped quickly on he shot out one foot, tripped me, and I fell. Instantly he and three other men were upon me. They tied my feet and bound my left arm fast to my body. It throbbed with pain, and I was sure I had broken my forearm in the fall. They left the right arm free from cords, but one big ruffian gripped it fast.

"Now perhaps you'll have time to read and sign that paper," said Fraser. "Carry him to the lamp-post, boys, where he can see." Fraser held the paper before my eyes, and I read:

"I hereby solemnly swear that I will never set foot on the Terrace again; that I will never see, nor attempt to see, Alice Leavenworth again; and that I will never write to her or in any way communicate with her."

"What nonsense is this?" I cried angrily.

"It is no nonsense, damn you," said Fraser. "Sign that paper; sign it quick. Then we'll start you for the ferry." He thrust a pencil into my hand. "Sign," said he again.

"I will never sign that paper," I replied. "I shall come to Grandview as often as I please. I shall see this young lady as often as I please; and in September next she will be my wife." That made him furious.

"Come on, then," he said. "Take him, boys."

They hurried me, faint with pain, down South street

toward the river. Behind the big brewery there was a vacant lot. In it stood a telegraph pole, by which they stood me. "Will you sign that paper?" came the demand once more.

"Never."

"Up with him, boys." In three minutes they had tied me head downward, kicking me brutally, mercilessly, and cursing terribly. Then there was a pistol-shot; I felt a sharp sting in my side, and fainted.

* * * * *

That shot, which was meant for my death, was the saving of my life. A policeman chanced to be passing the corner of Water and South streets just as the shot was fired. True to his instincts, he ran toward the spot from which the sound came, heard the feet of men running, sounded his alarm call for help, and came to where I was fast bound in semi-crucifixion. When the help arrived, they carried me to the city hospital.

* * * * *

Late that night Henderson was pacing his room at the Astor House, sorely perplexed. He did not know how to account for my non-appearance. He telegraphed the railway station, and found the train had come in on time. There were three thoughts in his mind. Either I had missed the train, or Alice had persuaded me to remain over until morning, or I had been waylaid coming down-town in New York. The first two thoughts he at once dismissed with the reflection, "he would have telegraphed." The third started him to communicate with police headquarters. A very careful search of the routes I could have taken down-town revealed no trace of any disorder or any crime.

Then the superintendent proposed that an inquiry be made of Grandview. Perhaps the waylaying had been there. Before morning he had learned that an unidentified stranger was in the hospital at Grandview with a broken arm, a gun-wound in his side, and with head, neck and shoulder bearing marks of contusions as if from kicks; that no assailants had been found, and no reasons could be assigned for the assault. The first train up in the morning brought Henderson to Grandview and to the hospital, where he quickly gave orders for the proper care of the stranger, about whose identity all sorts of conjectures were being made.

Soon after his arrival, Richard Leavenworth appeared. When Alice had come down to breakfast that morning, she had been confronted by the headlines in the paper:

**“AN UNKNOWN YOUNG MAN, WELL DRESSED,
FOUND TIED HEAD DOWNWARD TO A
TELEGRAPH POLE.”**

A few moments later, Mrs. Leavenworth had found her unconscious on the sofa in the hall, and her first waking words had sent Dick post-haste to the hospital.

“It is Jack,” she had whispered, “and Bruce did it.”

Henderson’s message to her by her brother was reassuring. All would be well, he hoped. That message sent, he proceeded to interview the police, who had already searched the ground over, but had obtained no clue except the pistol they had found not far from the telegraph pole. Looking the weapon carefully over, Henderson found the name, “S. Miner,” stamped with a steel die in the wood of the handle, and beside it a queer mark which he copied into his note-book.

Inquiry showed S. Miner to be the owner of a sport-

ing-goods store, to which Henderson immediately repaired.

"Did you ever see such a sign as that before?" he asked, producing the weapon.

The proprietor was a very eccentric little old man, with a reputation for his methodical ways. He did not believe in the indiscriminate sale of firearms, and usually found a way of associating the weapons he sold with their purchasers.

"Yes. That is my firearms identification sign," he replied.

"How does this identify?"

"Why, it tallies with my book."

"Would you object to showing me what this tallies with in your book?"

"Why, no. But what's the case?"

"The case of the man murderously assaulted last night. A pistol was found close by the place where the stranger was shot. The pistol bore this mark and your name."

"Oh, I see. Well, here's the record." The man produced a book, and, running rapidly down a long column of characters, found the one in question. Then he turned to a description of the pistol, the day it was sold, and the person who bought it. In this case the man was described, but no name given. "Young man, tall, well built, fresh face, yellow hair, stranger, would not give his name." The date of the sale was eight o'clock of the night before.

Back at the police office, Henderson told what he had learned. "That description fits young Fraser," said the chief.

"Who's he?"

"He's the son of the preacher in the Presbyterian

church. He does not live here." He called in one of his men to the private office. "Barney, have you seen young Fraser, the preacher's son, here lately?"

"Yes, he was here yesterday."

"Where did you see him?"

"Saw him goin' into old lady Leavenworth's on the Terrace about seven o'clock last night."

Then the chief turned to Henderson. "That fits with a curious piece of paper that was brought in while you were out. It was found in the lot, by the pole, with blood-drops on it. It was picked up when the pistol was, but has only just been turned in."

When Henderson read the paper Bruce had tried to make me sign, the case was clear to him. "I know all about this thing now," he said. "It's a case of jealous madness, and probably the man was drunk. I want that paper for three or four days. I want the young woman's name kept out o' the papers, and all further investigation kept secret in this office. The man in the hospital is my pastor. I'm a lawyer. If I can do what I want to do, young Fraser will never trouble any of you here again. I don't want to hurt him. I want to save him. There's only one way to do it, and that way lies through my possession of that paper." And it was yielded to him, together with the pistol.

During the day he learned from Alice the story of Bruce's visit on Friday evening, and of our meeting near her door. He asked Dick if he had any of Fraser's letters, and when he compared them with the blood-stained paper, reached the conclusion that he expected. Before night the police were on the trail of Fraser's accomplices.

On Monday morning Henderson walked into Rich-

ard Leavenworth's store in Newark, and asked if Mr. Fraser was in. He sent his card to the office. The young man received him courteously. When the common salutations were passed, Henderson said, "Ye dinna receive mornin' calls from lawyers often, I doot."

"No, I do not," was the reply. "Are you a lawyer?"

"Yes, I'm a lawyer, an' lawyers seldom call except they have business, I doot."

"Then you have business with me, I presume. What is its nature, may I ask?"

"What would ye be thinkin' its nature might be?"

"I am not a mind-reader," said Fraser.

"Ye would become a mind-reader if I said 'John Haynes,' I doot."

Fraser's ruddy face turned very pale, and Henderson went on, "I was right. I see ye are mind-readin' now. Ye are wonderin' whether John Haynes is dead, I doot."

Bruce gathered himself together, and said with an assumed bravado, "This is rather remarkable conduct on your part, Mr. _____. Ah! What did you say was your name? Oh, yes, I recall—Henderson. Rather remarkable conduct, Mr. Henderson. What does it mean? Who is John Haynes?"

"He is the young man whom you tried to kill last Friday night in Grandview," said Henderson.

"Mr. Henderson, if your errand here this morning is to insult me, you might as well consider your interview ended." He stepped to the office door and opened it. Henderson did not move. "Did you hear?" said Bruce.

"Yes, I heard. But I was too busy mind-readin' to

start. I was readin' what ye was thinkin.' Ye was sayin', 'Who is this Henderson? What does he know aboot me? What does he know aboot Grandview? Does he know aboot Alice Leavenworth — ' ”

“By the eternal,” shouted Bruce, “I'll not stand this. Here, Mike! Come and drag this insolent bully out of the office.” He made a dive, seizing Henderson by the collar. But he had reckoned without his host. Henderson had flung him into a corner of the office, and had locked the office door, before Mike could enter. Towering over Fraser, who had fallen, he said, “Ye thought I was a bairn, I doot. Ye thought ye could tie me head doon to a telegraph pole, I doot. Get up and sit doon here. I hae a word o' advice for ye. Ye may o'erpower meenisters in the dark, but ye canna do it wi' me, man; ye canna do it wi' me.”

“Who the hell are you?” said Bruce.

“I'm David Henderson, of Duqueboro, Pa. I'm elder of the Kir Jear Presbyterian Church of that city. John Haynes is its pastor, an' I'm his friend. He was best man at St. David's, and ye were usher. An' ye baith saw the same girl, an' he has won her; an' ye played the dastard trick wi' him last Friday night, an' he's like to dee. An' if he does, I'll hang ye, for I've got the evidence.”

“You've got no evidence, for the story's false. Of course I know Haynes, but I haven't seen him for two years.”

“Oh, yes, ye hae seen him in less than twice two days, an' I've the evidence o' that in ma pocket. The pistol, ye ken, an' the private mark on it for record, ye ken; an' the paper that ye wrote, ye ken, that ye tried to make the meenister sign.” Then Bruce blustered again :

"I want this tomfoolery to stop. I tell you to get out of this office," and he stepped to the door to unlock it. But Henderson was too quick, and had the key. Then his whole attitude changed. He dropped the Scotch fun.

"Mr. Fraser, let us talk at cross purposes no longer. I have evidence to hang you if Mr. Haynes dies. If he recovers, I will land you in the State prison for many years for assault with intent to kill, unless you sign the paper I have in my pocket. It is in your handwriting. Richard Leavenworth has given me letters of your writing which have been compared with this paper. It is blood-stained, and was found near the telegraph pole where you and your associates tied Haynes. Here it is." Then Bruce Fraser collapsed.

"Will you sign that paper?" said Henderson.

"Yes, I'll sign it," he said. He took the paper, dated and signed it, and Henderson affixed his own name as witness.

"When I open that door, you will find two policemen standing by it. Don't be troubled. They will go when I give the word. If John Haynes lives, you will have no trouble. If he dies, I'll hang you. I know your three accomplices. If he lives, Mr. Leavenworth will never mention this to you. Your work here will go right on. But you still have to promise one thing. When I telegraph for you, you are to come at once to Grandview. It will mean that John Haynes will live, but that you must come up and meet me. Will you promise?"

"Yes, sir, I promise," he said. Then Henderson opened the door and went away, followed by the policemen.

* * * * *

When I regained consciousness, it was to become aware of racking pains filling me. My head was weak and sore, and the brain could give me no account of where I was, nor of what had occurred. Presently I noticed the peculiar garb of two women who were in the room, and recognized them as nurses. I spoke finally, "Will you kindly tell me where I am?" They had not noticed me apparently as being awake.

"You are with friends," one said, "but you must not talk now."

"But I must preach Sunday," I said.

"Sunday is past," the woman said. "This is Wednesday. You really must not talk," and both nurses went out of sight.

Then came more hours of oblivion, but they were hours of sleep and not of stupor. When waking came again, Henderson sat by the bed, and a stranger with him. They were quick to see that I waked. The stranger spoke, "You've had a good sleep, Mr. Haynes, and I'm glad to say you are very much better."

"Better? Sleep? Have I been ill? Where am I?"

"We will tell you to-morrow. But don't talk now. Keep quiet to-day. To-morrow will find you much better."

"But where am I? Is this Duqueboro? Was there a railway accident?"

"No, this is Grandview, and I'm your doctor, and this is your friend. Now, Mr. Henderson, we will go. You can send your message." So the two departed.

I tried to think what had happened. But memory would tell me nothing. Weary, I gave up all effort to think. By and by a consciousness came that my head was wrapped in bandages. I raised my right hand

and felt the wrappings all about my head, but the movement gave me great pain in my left side, and as I groaned, a nurse came quickly and said, "Oh, Mr. Haynes, you must not raise your arm. You will hurt your side."

"What is the matter? Will no one tell me?"

"Yes, the doctor will tell you. You had an accident. But you must not talk."

So I subsided. I slept again after a time, but not until I had found that my left forearm was done up in splints and bandages. And still memory told me no word.

The doctor and Henderson came next day. They told me it was Friday, and that my condition was greatly improved. "Is my arm broken?" I inquired.

"Yes, but not badly; that will be healed very soon."

"Is my head cut?"

"No, but bruised, and there were severe contusions of the brain."

"What makes my side so sore?"

"A wound in the flesh above the ribs. It is not serious."

"I cannot understand," I said at last. "I don't know where I am, nor what has happened, nor why Mr. Henderson is here. What has happened?"

"Don't you remember being in Greenton last week?" asked Mr. Henderson.

"No."

"Don't you remember coming to Grandview?"

"No."

Henderson and the doctor slipped aside, and I heard the doctor say, "Some sudden shock to that brain will be necessary, or his days of preaching are done. His memory is a blank."

"What shall we do?" was the reply. I could not hear the answer. Henderson, however, left the room at once, and the doctor returned to me. "Be quiet a little longer," he said; "I think by another day you will be so much better, you will remember some things." Then he took leave.

The nurse settled me for sleep early. It must have been toward ten o'clock that I waked with a start and a scream. "Help! help!" I shouted. "They will murder me!" Over my bed stood Bruce Fraser and the three men who had assaulted me. I thought I was on the ground in the open lot by the telegraph pole. I was struggling to jump from the bed, when the hospital lights suddenly blazed up, and there were the two nurses, and Henderson, and the doctor, and Alice Leavenworth, and Bruce Fraser. The three men had disappeared.

I lay back utterly exhausted. In a moment I said, "Send Fraser away. He tried to kill me a few minutes ago; how I came here, I don't know. Send him away."

"He's all right," said the doctor. "I'll come back presently."

Then Bruce came up. "Mr. Haynes," he said, "I have had my lesson. I did try to kill you. But God saved me from that sin. Miss Leavenworth is here; Mr. Henderson is here; here, too, is the paper I tried to make you sign. It is blood-stained. But what I told you to sign, I have signed. I shall never see Miss Leavenworth again. This paper is yours. I am going away now. I will spend the night at my father's; to-morrow I shall start out to seek a new place in life, and if possible I will yet achieve something worth while."

XXIX

AT MY ALMA MATER

MRS. ARDMAN insisted that I should return to the home which had already been so hospitable, without seeking any other abiding place. "For you know, Mr. Haynes," she said, "you will bring that lovely girl here in the fall, and make a home of your own. It's only two months now until September, and the Major wants you here."

So there I was. My left arm was in a sling and would be for two weeks yet, but I was all right otherwise. Death had come very near to me, but a strong constitution had been too much for the rider on the pale horse. The feeling of young life and vigor was very strong in me that night in my room in the Ardmann home.

The accumulated mail had interested me greatly, and one letter had not only brought a great satisfaction, but it had also thrown a whole flood of light on Henderson's movements when he had left me in Grandview at the close of the Assembly. The letter in question was from the president of my Alma Mater, announcing the intention of the corporation to confer upon me the degree of Doctor of Divinity at the approaching commencement. While it did not mention Henderson's name, it did say influential persons from the General Assembly had presented the petition asking for the honor. It was easy to jump to a conclusion.

The only uncertainty about being present in person to receive the degree was the condition of my arm and the feeling of aversion to making a display of it by trying to wear academic costume. But there was no harm in writing to the president of my hope to be present, and to Alice I poured out my soul in a letter full of joy. All that could be needed to fill my cup of happiness on that commencement day would be the presence of the maid of honor. But that was impossible, and the thought vanished almost as suddenly as it came.

"Come down, Doctor; there's a caller here." It was Major Ardman calling from the hall below. There I found David Henderson. "I am no doctor, Major, even though you and my other elder there have been trying to capture the title for me."

"Well, if you are no doctor, you should be; and you will be some day, too." The Major was ignoring the latter part of my remark entirely.

"You speak as if by prophecy, Major Ardman, and it is no wonder. You and Mr. Henderson managed that trip of his after the Assembly with great skill. You thought you had your tracks all covered. But this uncovers them."

I handed Henderson the president's letter. He took it, read it, and with the most delightful effort at further blinding me said, "Man, man, what good fortune. You surprise me, you delight me. Ye'll be a doctor, juist as Geordie said the noo. How did ye work it? Who did ye get to go wi' your petition?"

"I didn't work it," I answered. "A friend of mine, unknown to me, got another friend of mine, also unknown to me, to go with a petition to Midaston. And that letter is the result."

"Oh, man! But ye're the great one for the unexpected. Who was the friend, noo?"

"A queer Scotch elder who was at the Assembly," I said.

"Oh, aye, I mind him. Dae ye remember him, Geordie? A feckless, blue-eyed, pinched-up weazened-faced Scotchman. He was frae Greenton, I doot. Was it MacNaughton? He has changed since he gave up the whiskey, I doot."

"No, my friend, it was not MacNaughton. It was no Greenton man. It was a Duqueboro man."

"Was it you, Geordie, an' ye never telt me?" said Henderson.

"No, it was you, Mr. Henderson. Own up now! You went a day in advance of me from Grandview. You went direct to Midaston. You came back to Greenton. You did it. Own up! Confess!"

"He's brought you to bay, David," the Major laughed. "Yes, Doctor, I can't deny it. He did it."

"An' hae ye telt Alice yet, lad? It wasna dune for ye, but for the lassie. Wad ye bring her here a bride, an' hae Phyllis Lorraine tossin' her head an' sayin' that that Henry the Eighth Papist husband o' hers had two D's after his name, an' ye never a one?"

When the laugh that made had subsided, I said, "Well, elder, friend, comrade, you have made me very happy indeed, and I thank you. There's only one thing necessary to fill my cup to running over, and that is to have Alice at commencement to witness the ceremony. But I can't ask her brother to go with her, and without him 'tis impossible. Conventionality is a stern mistress."

"Lad, canna ye stir wi'oot your Alice? But I

don't blame ye. I'd be so masel' only it's contrary to Scripture."

"What's contrary to Scripture?" I asked astonished,
"To have women goin' to the colleges."

"There's nothing about women and colleges in the Scriptures, Mr. Henderson."

"An' ye a preacher, an' not know that 'Huldah dwelt in the college in Jerusalem'? But she was a prophetess, an' your Alice is no prophetess. An' what wad yer Alice be at the college for, not bein' a prophetess?"

"Why, to see the ceremony, and to learn how they do things at the commencements. It is a fine sight for one who has never witnessed it."

"Hoot, man! Wad ye hae her tryin' to learn aboot the ways o' the college? An' ye a preacher! I say again, doesna the Scripture say, 'If they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at hame'? An' yer Alice hasna any husband, though she might be wantin' one, I doot."

"Well, it's outside the conventionalities, anyhow," I said, and I considered that final. But the Scotch-man answered, "Man, ye're incorrigible. I said naething aboot conventionalities. I said it wad be contrary to the Scriptures. An' it wad be, I doot."

* * * * *

Almost the first thing I saw, when I took my place on the commencement platform in the old White Church in Midaston, was a group in the far gallery of the packed house, that made me stare in dumb wonder. There sat Mrs. Henderson, and Alice Leavengworth, and the wizard. They saw me also, and the smile the girl sent across was entrancing. It made

me forget how awkwardly my gown was hanging over the arm in the sling. That smile has never gone out of my life. When the time came for me to rise and receive investiture with the insignia of the doctor's degree, some enthusiastic member of the old fraternity called, "Now, boys, here's to old Jack Haynes. Let her go." And the whole student body roared out, "D-O-C, Doc. T-O-R, tor. Doctor. J-A-C-K, Jack. Doctor Jack. Rah—Rah—Rah." The marshal thumped with his cane in vain. He called at the top of his voice, "Gentlemen of the college, order! silence! Order, gentlemen!" It was useless. The great audience added its uproarious laughter to the disorder the students had made, and in the midst of it the recipient of the degree, decorated with the doctor's scarlet band and the cerulean blue and white of the college, resumed his seat. But it was only for a moment. The marshal crossed the platform to present a splendid bunch of pink roses, and as the new doctor rose to accept it, the "Rah—Rah—Rah" of the students rang out once more. A card attached to the lovely gift bore the single word "Alice."

* * * * *

The Grandview papers gave an elaborate account of the wedding in the old First Church, on September the seventh. The lady who was the central figure has the record among her treasured keepsakes. The day was as beautiful as ever came out of the treasures of time, and the bride was the loveliest my eyes ever rested on, though in a long pastoral life I have been at close range with many brides. The Kir Jear Church was well represented. David and Mrs. Henderson were there; Major and Mrs. Ardman; and, of course, Felix and Julia.

As Alice and I had acted as chief assistants at St. David's, we made turn-about-fair-play at Grandview, for Phyllis Lorraine was matron of honor, and Harry Sinclair was best man, with Felix and Joe as ushers. What began at St. David's had come at last to its consummation at Grandview, and the minister of the Paoli monument was the officiating clergyman.

XXX

THE GREENTON CENTENNIAL

TWELVE years had passed, and Ruth Wyllis Haynes was ten years old. It was the year of the Greenton Centennial, and the local Committee of Arrangements had invited their former townsman and one-time pastor to be a speaker at the celebration. So when October came our little family set out for the dear old place. Alice had seen it only once, when we were on our wedding journey, and Ruth Wyllis had only heard of it as the home where her father had been a little boy. I had not been there in twelve years. Kipling's couplet:

"Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget, lest we forget,"

should be imbedded in every soul. We do forget. Our multitudinous life almost compels that. When my old home in Greenton was left behind to be my home no more forever, I thought the place and its people would always be uppermost in memory, and they were for a time. I knew when Jim Garvey returned from Salisbury jail, and how good Elder Harfis gave him work, and then slowly, almost unconsciously, he passed into memory's shadow-land. In the ten years that had elapsed since Ruth Wyllis was born, I had hardly thought of him. The work at Duqueboro was intense. There were many hoboes in Henderson's city. The Kir Jear Church was the

most influential socially of any in the flourishing town, and Henderson was absurdly ambitious to have his pastor a leader in every line. Little by little my letters to Tim and Joe had become separated by wider and wider intervals, and for five years my knowledge of the happenings in Greenton had been of the most casual character. Thoughts of this sort made me regretful as the distance between us and our destination grew hourly less, and Alice talked much of what we might expect to find. Ruth Wyllis was especially interested, and asked many questions. She had been taught to call Wendell "Uncle Tim," and her curiosity about him was great. The things of which we were sure were a trifle saddening, as we thought of them. We knew that Elder Harfis had passed to his eternal reward. Joe Smith and Helen were no longer in the old town. Three years before he had been called to the strongest Congregational church in Boston. Mrs. Harfis was living with Helen in Boston.

My anticipations had their mainspring in the fact that Tim Wendell and his good wife were to be our hosts. Tim was mayor of Greenton now, and men called him the Hon. Timothy Wendell.

We broke the journey by a stop at Grandview for a night in the old home. The dear mother was still there, and sat with us for a while, watching the lovely scene under the October moonlit sky. She went at last to the library, taking Ruth, and leaving Alice and me alone in the hammock, as in the long ago.

Kind nature had been good to Alice, giving her the grace of eternal youth. Some old friends, who called later that night, said, "Alice, you don't look one day older than on that September day twelve years ago

when you walked out of the old church." Why should she look older? No great sorrow had come to her. Love had walked with her wherever she went, making friends of all persons whom her life touched, and the peace of God that passeth all understanding was in her heart.

We would have staid longer in that earthly paradise, had it been possible, but our Mecca was beyond. Northward we set our faces, and on a Friday evening came to Greenton. The charm of reaching the old city was gone, for the wheels of the Concord coach which carried me in my college days had rolled their last roll. A railway from Greenton tapped the main line northward from Troy, and a steam whistle screeched through the hills in place of the sound of the old stage horn. Wendell's carriage was at the train, and we were driven rapidly to his fine residence next my old home. Wendell had prospered, and my heart rejoiced as I saw how time had been good to him. Our welcome was delightful. Mrs. Wendell took Ruth Wyllis straight to her heart, her first remark on seeing her being, "That child is very beautiful. She is the image of her mother." That little refrain was sung by many voices ere our Greenton visit ended: and I may as well confess now as later that it is possible for a former pastor to find when he returns after long absence to visit his old parish, and brings his handsome daughter and still more beautiful wife with him, that he no longer occupies the first place in the notice of his old people.

I knew that the church had secured a pastor after Joe's departure, but even his name had gone from me until he called upon us the morning after our arrival. The moment, however, that I entered the room where

THE GREENTON CENTENNIAL 845

he was waiting, I knew him, and a flood of memories poured over me. Out of the past rose the "Castle of Indolence" and the bare-footed, freckled, sandy-haired boy that we called "Hank." As he advanced with outstretched hand I said, "Thornton—Rev. Henry Thornton? Why, I know you. You are Hank, of the 'Castle of Indolence' on Indian Lake."

"Yes," he answered, "I'm David Thornton's son."

"What started you out, Mr. Thornton?"

"The Squire and you."

"Why, how?" I asked in some astonishment. "I never talked with you about leaving the forest; I thought a guide's boys never left the lakes."

"Most of them never do," he replied. "But don't you know how you and the Squire used to bring paper-covered books to the cabin?"

"Yes, I remember that."

"Well, you left a lot of them, one time and another. I read them, and came to understand after a while, that the world was bigger than Indian Lake, that there were loftier mountains than Old Snowy, and fairer, larger rivers than Jessup's, and more things to know than how to trap muskrat and otter, and shoot deer, and angle for trout, and I began to want to know, just to know something about this world. One day my father came upon me reading. He stopped, looked at me a minute, and then called out, 'Hank, ain't you readin' a good deal?' 'Ain't got much to read,' I answered. 'Ain't you readin' a good deal, Hank?' 'Ain't neglectin' nothin', be I?' I said. He walked slowly back toward me and said, 'No, d'no's you be. But sho! fellers ain't no good for guides, that reads.' 'Got more deer than you did, last hunt, dad,' I said. 'Oh, 'tain't spiled ye yet, but 'twill. Ye kin make

preachers an' doctors an' lawyers out o' book larnin', but ye can't make guides.' 'Wal, I don't b'leeve I kin quit, dad,' I said. 'Don't b'leeve ye kin, nuther,' he answered. 'More'n that, don't b'leeve I want ye to, nuther.' I was sitting on that big rock down by the shore; you remember it, Mr. Haynes. Well, my father came and sat down and went on with his talk. 'Hank, I allers wanted ye to go to school, but I couldn't make it. But you've got hold o' books, an' ye won't be no good no more. If ye want to go to Wes'port this winter to school, go on. I can't help ye any, but ye kin get jobs an' arn yer own way.' That's the way I came to go out of the woods, Dr. Haynes," he ended. "Summers, I guided. Nine months of the year, I studied. I earned my own way all through. I had no money to spend on follies, but I had enough. You and I have the same Alma Mater. I went to Union Seminary. When Dr. Smith went to Boston, the Squire brought me over here, and here I am, your host, Dr. Haynes, and proud I am to have you in my pulpit, proud to have for mine the pulpit which once was yours."

That night a banquet was to be given to the mayor and the visiting guests, including the Governor of the State, by the Greenton Bummers' Club. When Tim told me of that, I said, "Tim, you don't mean to tell me that the club has survived Joe Smith's departure from Greenton?"

"Oh, yes," was his response. "The departure of two Joes couldn't break up that club. That institution has made this town the sweetest, cleanest town in this country. We've been a prohibition community under local option now for ten years. That club has done it."

"But what do they do?" was my eager question.

"Follow their leader and his lieutenant. There hasn't been a man in the lockup for drunkenness in six years. If a man is ever seen on the streets drunk, one of the club has him down to Bob's in short order. They give him a hot bath, and a shower, and a rub, and put him to bed. When he wakes, he gets a good square meal and has an interview with Bob or Jim before he can get away. They seldom have the same fellow twice."

"So Jimmie MacNaughton holds right on, does he?"

"No, Doctor. Jimmie don't hold on. Jimmie let go four years ago."

"Well, that's sad, Tim. I thought he would stay sober and true until he died."

"Well, who said he didn't?"

"Why, you, just now. You said he went to drinking again, four years ago."

"See here, Doctor! you used to be smarter than that. I never said he went to drinking. I said he let go. So he did—let go the club; let go life; let go earth; let go hard times; and took tight hold of glory. Jimmie started on the up-grade almost the first day of the great revival, and he kept right on going up for twelve years. He's on the top of the grade now."

"Yes, I understand. But see here, Tim. Let the 'Doctor' go. Call me 'Jack,' can't you? No one does, any more. Joe's gone, and Harry Sinclair's become professor in the Divinity School in Philadelphia, and I'm 'Jack' to no one now but Alice."

Tim laughed. "Well," he replied, "as your Mr. Henderson would say, 'ye're juist as near daft as ye ever were, I doot.'"

That Saturday night, Joe came. I was to preach in the morning and he at night, in the old church. Joe was guest of other friends, so that I did not see him until we met at the banquet, at which function we were received by the president, Mr. Robert Hazeltine, and, wonder of wonders, by the vice-president, Mr. James Garvey. To say that astonishment made me dumb, is to put it mildly. A poor wretch, struggling against gin and tobacco, down on the floor of a cell in the county jail, saying, "Jesus Christ, I don't want you to fergit," had gotten out from "the under side of things," and was away up on the upper side, evidently destined to be there till death. He stood before me, erect, broad-shouldered, clear-faced, keen-eyed, well-dressed. The hand that grasped mine was strong. And this was the "Jim" of whom Wendell had spoken, who, with Bob, was making Greenton a city of righteousness.

"Mr. Haynes," he said, "I can't call you 'Doctor'—I do not receive you to-night quite as I did the last time you saw me. I was in Salisbury jail then—but I'll never be there again, thank God and thank you."

"Jim, this all seems strange to me—I can't realize it. You've been a far stronger man than I supposed you would be. You've won a wonderful victory over yourself, and I'll always think of you as a hero of self-conquest."

"No," said he, "you're wrong. Remember, when I asked you what had happened to Jimmie MacNaughton and Bob, that they'd stopped drinking, you said, 'Jesus Christ had happened to 'em'? Well, that's how it was with me. I did nothing—I couldn't. Jesus Christ happened to me. He's done it all."

The banquet was a memorable occasion. Bob knew

how to set a good table, and the spread was fine. But the best of it came after dinner, when Joe Smith and the Governor, who both excelled in after-dinner speaking, caused abundant laughter and a rare good time. Finally Bob rose, saying:

“The last speech will be by Mr. James Garvey, commonly known as Jim.”

Jim rose.

“Mr. President,” he began, “I’m no speaker. Thirteen years ago, if you had asked me in this club to speak, I’d have said, ‘I ain’t up to her, Bob, I ain’t up to her!’”

Starting so, he went on to tell what I already knew, —of the wretchedness of his life until he landed in Salisbury jail.

“The day I got out,” he went on, “Jimmie MacNaughton was at the door. He brought me down home, and took me to Dr. Smith’s, who lived in Mr. Haynes’ old home. Mr. President, Dr. and Mrs. Smith gave me just such a meal that night as Mr. Haynes had, and put me to bed in the same room I’d been in before. That fixed me for good and all.

“Next day, Mr. Harfis took me into his employ, and the only thing he said was, ‘Garvey, you’re going to be a man, and I want a little part in the job.’ I worked there three years. Then one day, Mr. Harfis said, ‘What do you do with your money, Mr. Garvey?’ No man had ever called me Mr. Garvey before. I said I’d saved a little, about five hundred dollars. He asked me if he might have it to invest for me, and I agreed. Then he doubled my wages.

“Well,” continued Jim, “he took my savings every month, and when he died his books showed that out of what he had invested for me he had made ten

thousand dollars, and had it in five per cent. bonds. That sounds big, but it's true. Then Bob came to me"—he had forgotten to address the president, in his earnestness—"and said, 'Garvey, Jimmie MacNaughton's sick, and he's not going to get well. I want some one to help me run the club, and we'll pay you five hundred dollars, with your board.' So here I am.

"I've studied a good deal, these last five years. I've committed speeches to memory, so as to learn how to talk as I ought. But I don't deserve any credit. Everything is due to the men who helped. Mr. Haynes once told me there was a man in me somewhere, and he was going to try to let him out. I think he has—and the rest of you have kept him out. Sometimes there are steep places and it's hard to go, but I'm going yet.

"Now, all I have to say is this. All that has happened to me has come out of Christ's wonderful grace,—but Mr. Haynes is the man who put me in the way of receiving that grace; so I'm going to close by saying what I said to him that night, thirteen years ago, at the door of the best room in his house, when he caught me with his mother's jewelry in my hand, 'Say, preacher, you're the best man I ever seen.'

"Mr. Haynes," he ended, coming over to me, "there's your five hundred dollars bail money, and interest at six per cent for fifteen years." He handed me a draft for nine hundred and fifty dollars. As he laid it on the table before me, Joe Smith leaped to his feet, crying, "Bummers! three cheers for Jim Garvey! hip, hip"—and the hurrahs that followed almost took off the roof of Bob's old tavern. When quiet came, the Governor of the State rose.

THE GREENTON CENTENNIAL 351

“Mr. Garvey,” said he, “you were a convict in Sing Sing?”

“Yes, your Honor.”

“Have you ever received papers of pardon?”

“No, your Honor.”

“Very well. Your pardon and restoration to citizenship will be forwarded as soon as I return to Albany.” And once more Joe led in cheers.

I told Alice the story of the evening when we were alone together, and she said, “Jack dear, to have had a part in saving the soul of such a man is worth while.” And it was. He had traveled a great distance from the degradation in which he was twelve years before, to the heights of honor on which he was standing now. From silver cup stolen to bail bond paid was the length of the diameter of the moral universe.

The events of the Centennial went one by one as they had been programmed, but for me the climax was the banquet of the Bummers’ Club.

Alice and Ruth and I were at home again ere long, but often for weeks Alice would say to me, “What a Saviour our Saviour is, Jack. He has saved Joe and Bob and Tim and that awful Garvey.”

XXXI

HENDERSON'S LAST DAYS

TWELVE years of intense activity had left their marks upon the lives of those whose fortunes have been unfolded in my story. They could be seen most plainly upon Major Ardman. He was past eighty now, and though he made no complaint, his days were labor and sorrow. The fact did not seem to disturb the Major, but it was a cause of much solicitude to David Henderson. When the Major began to be absent from church occasionally on Sunday morning, David said :

“ The Major is comin’ to his last days. He’ll be goin’ awa’ soon, I doot. That will be the ringin’ o’ a warnin’ bell for me, man. That will mean Henderson’s last days are comin’. I ken it weel.”

It was my duty to pass these forebodings on to a distant day with such grace as was in me. For a time it was not very hard; but when failing strength had put an end to the Major’s daily visit at the eventide to Henderson’s library, my task was more difficult. The end came suddenly at last, as it is wont to do. Sunday before Christmas, none of the Ardmans and none of the Hendersons were in church, and I was not surprised when, at the end of the morning service, a note was handed me by an usher, announcing that the Major had gone home.

Of course the shock was great to us all. This was the first break in the session of the Kir Jear Church

during my pastorate. The first words David Henderson said to me were :

" Disintegration of the session has begun, I doot. I'll be goin' next, laddie." That was all the allusion he made to the event, until affairs in my own family reached a point that caused him to speak in the same strain again.

The twelve years had made changes in the people who dwelt in the manse. No single expression will show what was the nature of these changes more clearly than this. Almost every night, while Alice sat with me in the library, Ruth Wyllis was spending her evening in the parlor with David Henderson Ardman. They had been children together. But David had never seemed to care much for the girls, until Ruth Wyllis came home from college just a year before. Then he, and Kir Jear Church in general, waked to the fact that the girl was beautiful.

There was no better young man in Duqueboro than this grandson of Major Ardman. He was a law-student in his Grandfather Henderson's office, and bade fair to be an honor to his antecedents.

As for Alice and me, we were both growing old. I was fifty-four, and my hair as white as it will ever be. But Alice and her daughter were taken for sisters, often and often, by strangers and casual acquaintances.

Such was the condition of affairs at the manse, when one night in the February that followed the Major's death, Henderson came in and seating himself before the open fire in my library, remained for a long time without saying a single word. I knew him too well to disturb his meditation. When finally he spoke, he said :

"Man! Doctor! that grandson o' mine is gey fond o' your daughter, I doot."

"That's not so very strange," I answered, "considering who her mother is."

"Ye're right, Doctor. I'm only sorry I hadna been young, so she might have had a husband equal to her. But it's the lad, no the mither, I'm thinkin' aboot."

"Well—what you said made me think of the girl, and the girl made me think of her mother. People say she's the image of her mother."

"Man! Doctor! ye never was grateful' enough to me, for marryin' ye to yon girl—ye didna appreciate me."

"Why, my good elder," and I laughed, as I always must at Henderson, "I had a lurking thought that I won her myself."

"Lurkin' thought, lad! Why, I threw ye bodily at the girl, an' she took ye oot o' peety." As Henderson aged, his Scotch dialect was becoming more marked.

I knew my man, so I made no reply. Presently he started on another tack.

"Yon's a good lad, yon Davie."

"He couldn't very well be other than good, with such a grandfather," I answered.

"Man, man, you mustna ca' me guid like that an' leave the Major oot. The Major was a good man, an' I was his friend, an' I can't hae him put at disadvantage by leavin' him oot."

Once more I waited for him to say what was in his mind. As I expected, he continued about the boy.

"He'll make a fine lawyer, yon boy. He'll hae plenty o' siller. He'll be wantin' to marry your daughter, I doot."

"Well," I answered, "that won't displease me any

—but I'm not so sure about the girl. You know, her mother sent his father hunting in other fields."

"Aye, I ken. But Felix wasn't Davie; and Ruth, your lass, isn't her mither—oh, no, no!"

"Well," I said thoughtfully, "Mr. Henderson, if Ruth Wyllis doesn't object, her mother and I won't."

"Man! Doctor! dinna ca' me Mr. Henderson. Ca' me David. No one ca's me David, noo the Major's gone, an' I miss him. So I want ye to ca' me by the Major's name. Ca' me David."

"Well, David, I will."

"But, man! Doctor! about the marryin'. It would be a richt fine way to have them married before I dee, I doot."

"Now, David," I answered, "you talk too much about dying, lately. It's not healthful. We all die. The Major went when God's time came. Your time will come, and mine. But we mustn't be troubled over that."

"But, man, canna ye see? I want them married before I dee. An' if they're no, we canna leave them here alone, when we gae to the Canyon in the spring, you an' Alice an' Felix an' Julia and Mrs. Henderson an' me."

So that was what all this long beating about the bush had meant. I was quick to answer. "It may be that the trip to the Canyon can be arranged, but that those two young people should be married is out of the question. Neither the girl nor the mother would consent to that. Besides, they are not even engaged yet."

"Ah, but, man, they will be: they will be. An' if we canna gae to the Canyon till they be married, they must be married before we gae; an' I must go in May,

I doot, for I shall gae on ma lang, lone journey before anither May. Dinna shake yer heid, man, Doctor. I ken : I ken it weel." With that he left me.

The night before we started on the Western trip, when the packing was all finished, and the trunks were gone to the station for the early morning train, the doors between the parlor and library were suddenly thrown back, and there stood Ruth Wyllis and David Ardman, hand in hand. Alice and I were in our usual places, on opposite sides of the table. I saw her turn very pale; my own heart jumped wildly for a moment. We both knew what was coming. The reason for it was plain enough. Alice had steadily declined to start on the long journey, leaving Ruth Wyllis behind. Young David had no intention of having the width of the continent between him and the girl he loved, with the chance of her seeing other men whom she might fancy more than she fancied him, unless he himself had made sure of her, if he could, before she went.

So there they stood—and how handsome they were! Young David was as direct as his grandfather was indirect.

"Mrs. Haynes," he said, and his voice was firm, "Dr. Haynes—I have told Ruth Wyllis I love her and have asked her to be my wife; the answer she has made is, that she can do, will do nothing, without your consent. She has not even told me she loves me, but I think I know. May I have your daughter for my wife?"

Alice rose and walked across to Ruth with a quick step. Emotion was sweeping in waves over her face:

"Baby dear, you have been my love and joy for

twenty-two years. I have seen that this must come, but I was not quite ready for it. Are you ready, dear? Do you love Mr. Ardman?"

"Yes, mother," was her low reply.

Turning to me, Alice said, "Jack, we can do this, can't we?" What could be said to that but "yes"? But though my lips said "yes," my eyes were full of tears.

Alice turned back to David Ardman. She put her arms around his neck and kissed him, then, looking at Ruth Wyllis, said, "Now you can give him your answer, dearie." Ruth lifted her face to the strong young man, and said with burning cheeks, "Do you need an answer, laddie?" And with that they two slipped back into the parlor and closed the door. David Henderson Ardman had come between Ruth Wyllis and her mother, even as John Haynes had come between Alice Leavenworth and her mother, twenty-five years before.

* * * * *

Ten days later, I stood with Alice on a projecting point of the wall of the southern rim of the Grand Canyon of the Colorado. We saw the sun sink westward to lose itself behind the sands and summits of the Mojave Desert, and yet we made no move to go. We had wandered away from the rest of the company, taking the path close to the edge of the mighty precipices. We had been away thus since just after noon-day, finding with each new point of view new wonders of light and color and far perspective. We had reached this projecting promontory just before the sunset, and stood there oblivious to all on earth save the glories of the vast gorge. Far away across the colossal chasm, the north wall of the Canyon lifted

itself against the sky, and made a horizon line of purple and emerald and ruby, gleaming and flashing, as the westering sun moved farther and farther down toward night. To the east and west, whichever way we turned our entranced gaze, were piled in masses bewildering in the wonder of their beauty, buttes and domes and pinnacles and towers, bastions and turrets and amphitheatres, all tinted as if gigantic genii with brush and color had touched them but yesterday. Far off in the southeast rose the twin peaks of the San Francisco mountains, shining like burnished silver as the sunlight was reflected from their crowns of snow. A sheer mile below, like a winding thread flowed the great river, pressing with impatient force out through these rocky confines toward the ocean.

How long we might have stood there unvexed by thought of time or place, I do not know. We were on the rim of the world, and night might have overtaken us still watching there, unheeding all but God, but for the sound of wheels and a familiar voice :

“ Daft ! clean daft, I doot. I always kenned one was, but I didna suppose the other was, ever.”

As Alice and I turned, there was the carriage in which Henderson and Ruth Wyllis were seeking us.

Supper was late. The belated evening train had just arrived. The dining-room was crowded, but at the table next ours sat four people, the sight of whom almost made me shout. They were Joe Smith and Helen, with Mr. Harris and a lady whom I rightly judged to be his wife. There was immediate interchange of salutations and presentations, after which Henderson lapsed into an unusual silence. Through the whole supper he made no slightest allusion to the newcomers. But no sooner was the meal finished

than he approached my cousin, and, gravely shaking hands with him again, said :

“ Ye hae a preacher in tow, an’ I hae anither. Ye’re tired o’ yours, I doot. They’re a great responsibility.”

“ Oh, no,” was the answer. “ I’m not tired of my preacher. I don’t think you are of yours. But we’ve changed since we parted years ago.”

“ So I would be thinkin’. Ye’re growin’ old. But ye’re no too old to travel wi’ me for the trip we’re takin’. It will rest ye frae too much preacher, I doot.”

Harris laughed as he replied, “ I’ve not had too much preacher, if you mean Dr. Smith. He’s a rare companion. I am surprised if you have had too much of your preacher, for I traveled with him for six months, and did not weary of him in the least.”

“ Oh, aye, ye might travel wi’ him sax months and not be weary. I’ve been listenin’ to him for twenty-five years, an’ I’m no weary. There’s many a waur companion and many a waur preacher, if ye only kent where to look for ‘em. But, man, ye must travel wi’ us. I wad finish the conversation.”

“ What conversation, Mr. Henderson ? ”

“ What one would it be but that aboot releegion, which we hadna time for on the ither journey. Ye remember ye didna ken what releegion was.”

With another hearty laugh, Harris turned to me. “ You know I told you Mr. Henderson would talk of nothing, that time we met on shipboard, except religion. And now he says we had not time for it.”

“ An’ we didna, man—we didna. D’ ye mind how I was holdin’ that releegion was the soul o’ man seekin’ to achieve the life o’ God in this world ? An’ ye mind ye wouldna accept that defineetion ? Ye’ll travel wi’ our party an’ finish the discussion, I doot.”

"I remember well that I did not agree with your definition, but my memory as to what it was is not so good as yours. I would have said you claimed that religion was believing what the catechism ——"

"Hoot, man, how could I be sayin' sic a thing as that, if I didna believe it? An' how would I be rememberin' a defineetion if I didna give it? At what are ye laughin', Doctor?" turning sharply on me. "It's no manners to laugh sic a way at Mr. Harris. I'm no laughin' at him. D' ye mind what the Buik says aboot the cracklin' o' thorns under a pot?"

Of course I had recognized my own definition given on that ride to Jersey City so long ago, and I remembered how Tim Wendell had prophesied that I would live to hear Henderson quote it as his own. I at once understood my Scotchman's purpose, though Mr. Harris had not the least idea that he was being used for a bit of by-play with me. Henderson would almost as soon have lost his tongue as confess to me directly that he had adopted my definition, and the little ruse by which he managed to give me this information was intensely amusing. So I continued to laugh in spite of his rebuke.

"Ah, man," he cried reproachfully, "ye're incorrigible wi' your laughter. What will the man think o' ye? Are ye gone daft?"

"No, no, David," I answered. "I'm only delighted to hear you corner the Congregationalist. But why didn't you get this settled in correspondence long ago?"

"Man, d' ye think that arguments sic as I would mak' can be put into friendly epeestles? An' we had better things to write aboot than sic rideeculous matters as catechism releegion."

"My friend," said Harris now with great gravity, "if I ever said what you attribute to me, I renounce it all. I accept your definition. I never heard it before, but it's good, and I'll write it in my note-book."

Henderson finished the incident.

"You, a man o' intelligence, never heerd it before ! Why, man, I've been hearin' it for twenty-five years. Ye ought to come to Duqueboro an' be a Presbyterian. The Doctor there an' I have been knowin' aboot yon defineetion for twenty-five years. But I'm glad, I'm more glad than I can tell ye that ye've consented to travel wi' us for the journey."

Then Joe Smith went out into the outer office of the hotel, and laughed as if he would collapse.

* * * * *

When we reached home, the weeks until September the seventh were very full of anticipation at the manse. Henderson's delight knew no bounds. But though he came to see me every day, we saw that the good man's last days were coming on. He had given up his professional life before going across the continent ; and when he was settled back into the old haunts, the strain of the non-occupation was breaking the tough Scotch constitution. Then, too, he missed his own boy, David, Jr., who had married and gone to Texas a few years before, to take charge of his interests there. He had promised to come up for the wedding festivities, and a new fear took Henderson now, that he might not live to see his son.

"Man, Doctor," he would say, "d' ye think I'll dee before the day ?" Often he asked that. And my answer always was :

"Die, David ? and you to have such a grand-

daughter as Ruth Wyllis? No, you'll not die for a long time, we hope — ”

“ No, ye dinna: Jack, ye dinna. Ye know I shall dee ere long, I doot — ”

But the day came—the anniversary of Alice's wedding-day and mine, and it was to be the wedding-day of Ruth and David Ardman. The marriage ceremony was in the church, and the reception was given by Mrs. Henderson. No happier man was ever seen than David Henderson that night. He forgot all his forebodings, and was as he was in the days of his power.

But what of Alice on that wedding-night? Back to the manse, alone in our room, she threw her arms around my neck, crying, “ Jack! we are just as we were twenty-five years ago. Our baby has gone. We're all alone now: now and for aye. We shall not have twenty-five years more. The years we have had are beyond compare. I never thought a man could make a woman as happy as I have been.”

* * * * *

On the morning after the wedding, David came to the study. His face was radiant. “ Man, Doctor,” he began, “ I can dee happy noo. They are married, thae young things, an' the twa are handsomer than you an' Alice, I doot. Man, the girl's not as beautiful as her mother; but the laddie — Losh! he's far an' awa' beyond ye. He luiks like me, I doot.”

“ Yes,” I laughed, “ if having eyes and nose and mouth makes one look like another.”

“ Hoot, man! Doctor! Don't joke wi' a deedin' man—I'm goin' the journey now they're married.”

“ Not yet, David,” I replied, “ not yet.” I spoke as cheerily as I could, for always, when he talked

in such strain, he was moved by emotions which waked the overtone in my own soul.

"Yes, soon now, John ——" He had never called me "John" before, and the new note moved me still more deeply. He continued talking.

"I said 'John,' ye mind. That is because ye're my son now. Ruth is your daughter, isna she? An' noo that she's married to Davie, she's my granddaughter, an' the father of a grand-daughter must be the son o' the grandfather."

"Well, 'father,'" I said, "I have made progress indeed. First you were my acquaintance, and then my elder, and then my friend David, and now my father. What will come next?"

"Oh, brither will come next. When I've made the journey, an' ye've made the journey, an' we will be standin' thegither haudin' the han's o' the great Elder Brither in the Kingdom. Won't that be graun, John?"

David only lived four weeks more. He was up and down from his house to mine, but there came a day when he did not come, but sent word that he wished to see me. As soon as he saw me, he began:

"I have been thinkin' aboot yon Garvey man, your thief man. I telt ye that ye'd no ca' to be a philanthropist. He went to the bad, I doot. I was right, as usual."

I was astonished a little at this, for I had long since told him about Garvey's wonderful transformation. But I said no word in reply to make him know that he had forgotten, if indeed he had.

"No," I replied. "He came out of jail twenty-five years ago. He became a most worthy citizen. The Governor of the State gave him full restoration to

citizenship twelve years ago. He is the mayor of Greenton now."

David was deeply interested. "This is a gran' country, John. What opportunities it gives men! Think what it did for me, the poor Scotch lad. But the grace o' God is greater than the country. That Garvey man is a trophy o' the grace o' God."

The bridal pair returned next day, going to David's for the first stopping place, as that was his wish. Every day of the week that followed, I visited him.

Sitting in a chair in his library, he received me. There was a day presently when he was very feeble, and after that he never rose. He said about the middle of that week, one morning, "John, I'm startin' on the journey, I doot. I shall never return. I am goin' to find the city which hath foundations. D' ye ken? There's a river flows through the midst o' it. It will be sae beautiful I shallna be wantin' to return. D' ye ken?"

"Are you ready to make the journey, father?" I asked him.

"Aye, John—a' ready. There'll be a river there: a beautiful river. D' ye ken?"

"Yes," I said. "In the midst of the city it flows."

"There's no high bluff above it, John, like yon Greenton stream. D' ye mind the Greenton stream, John? That was a great fish: that first one. I never took one like that before. There'll be none like that i' the city, I doot." I saw his mind was wandering. Presently he said:

"I was a' wrang, John. 'Tisna belief in the catechism that reelection is. Reelecgon is the soul o' man

seekin' the life o' God. I've been thinkin' o' that for twenty-eight years. Ye were right, John; who telt ye that?"

I answered, "No one, father, unless it was God. That came to me while I talked with you that day in the train."

"Man, John, ye're right again. God gave ye that. He gave ye that for me. I was thinkin' believin' was suffeecient, an' livin' as I pleased. Ye broke me o' that. For thirty years, a'most, I have been seekin' the life o' God—an' I've found it. I'm comin' up wi' it. See where it is—the life o' God—Jack—pastor—good, faithful friend—I've found it. The life o' God is mine. Ye showed me the way, an' it's mine forever an' forever."

"Father," I began, about to thank him for his lovely tribute to my poor service to him; "father—" but there I stopped. I looked at him with my heart in my eyes, and my sentence was never finished. For he was not there. He had started on his journey.

XXXII

HENDERSON'S WILL

THE body of David Henderson was laid to rest in Duqueboro Glen Cemetery. A granite block marks the spot. The County Bar Association paid a great tribute to his ability, integrity, and civic honor. About the hardest moment of my professional life was when the last words of the solemn rite were spoken at the side of the open grave. Alice and I spent the evening with Mrs. Henderson and her family. The house seemed singularly lonely, though there were nine of us together. "Loch, man!" and "Hoot, hoot!" had been heard in that house for the last time. Judge Elgin, the Clerk of the Orphans' Court, called during the evening, and said, "Mr. Henderson left a paper in my possession, to be read on the day after his funeral, to the very persons who happen to be present here now. I will fulfill the request tomorrow whenever you may say." Mrs. Henderson appointed ten o'clock next morning. When that hour arrived, we all were assembled. Judge Elgin read as follows:

"In the name of God: Amen. Many men think they must make a will before they die. Having had their wives' wills all their lives, they think they will have their own when they are dead. A dead man's will is of no account to him after he's dead, I doubt. Therefore, being of sound mind and disposing memory before my death, I have expressed my mind in accord-

ance with my memory, also before my death. But I have not made known to any person what my mind is. That will be discovered when the person herein appointed has opened the safe in my private room in my own house. William Elgin, the Clerk of the Orphans' Court of Algonquin County, is that person. It is my will while living that he shall open my safe when I am dead. He will do it in the presence of my family and my pastor and his wife.

"It is furthermore my will while alive, that when I am dead, my beloved wife shall take the contents of the safe, and give them to the persons to whom they are addressed. It is also my wish that the persons receiving the contents of my safe shall take them away and open them in private, and that no one of these persons shall make known to the other, nor to any one on earth, what are the contents of these packages, for the period of five years after they have been received. By that time I will be forgotten, and no one will care what I did with my property, I doubt. For, in my opinion, the whole matter is nobody's business but my own. This is my last will and testament, a will that will cause no trouble to anybody, and dispense with all legal services, and avoids the exasperation which attends the ordinary will. If any one asks of what property David Henderson died possessed, be sure to answer, of not a hap'orth. He was supposed to have some when he lived; but when he died, not a penny that was his could be found. This is my last will and testament.

"DAVID HENDERSON."

We stood and looked at each other in silence for a moment or two. Then the Judge said, "That is very

characteristic of David," and Mrs. Henderson smiled as she answered, "Yes, Mr. Henderson never did anything as anyone else would."

Then the Judge went to the private office and opened the safe. He had evidently been prepared for this, for he knew the combination of the lock. When the door was thrown back, nothing was to be seen but six parcels tied with red law tape. There was not a book or paper of any sort at all. The Judge said, "Mrs. Henderson, by the terms of the will, you must take the packages from the safe." She did so. They were addressed to William Elgin, Mrs. Mary Henderson, Mrs. Julia Ardman, David Henderson, Jr., David Henderson Ardman, and Rev. John Haynes, D. D. One by one, Mrs. Henderson handed them to us. When the Judge received his, he said, "I have no knowledge of the contents of any of the packages. I have performed the duties devolved upon me by my friend's singular paper. It undoubtedly relates to what was his property. I surmise, however, that it will be found he has left no property of any sort in his own name." With that, Judge Elgin made his adieu and departed.

The situation was a very strange one. We stood there holding what no doubt represented David Henderson's great property. But no one of us knew how much it was, or what each had received. David, Jr., was the first to speak. He said, "We can do nothing but respect my father's request. But I think we should make ourselves sure that we will respect it. Let us all agree each with each, and each with all, that we will respect it. Shall we shake hands on that?" To that we all agreed, and made solemn covenant with clasped hands to tell to no one, nor to each other, for

five years, what the various packages contained. And then we separated. The Duqueboro *Clarion* said next day, with the usual spectacular display :

**THE DEAD MILLIONAIRE, DAVID HENDERSON,
LEAVES NOTHING TO CHARITY, AND
NOTHING TO THE BOARDS OF HIS CHURCH.**

The article that followed was sensational, caustic, and untrue.

* * * * *

More than five years have passed since that promise was made in David Henderson's private office. My lips are therefore unsealed. Exactly five years from the time of that promise Mrs. Henderson received the following note:

New York, _____

*"Mrs. Mary Henderson,
"Duqueboro, Pa.*

"DEAR MADAM:

"As instructed by your late husband, David Henderson, I write to-day to say that prior to his death he put into my hands, as Treasurer of the Board of Home Missions, five hundred thousand dollars, to be divided in ways he specified, among the eight Boards of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. This is to inform you that the division was made as directed, and receipts from the several Treasurers are hereby sent you. By Mr. Henderson's request, no one knew from whom this money was received but me. The sums were not all paid at one time, but payment was scattered along over thirty months, as specified by Mr. Henderson.

"Yours very sincerely,
"_____, Treasurer."

This was the first that anyone had ever known of

the man's great gift to the Church he loved. The gifts to his own family are their own matter, and have never been made public. When my own parcel was opened, there was disclosed to view the old Bible which was the foundation-stone of my acquaintance with this singular man. With it was a note that read as follows :

“DEAR JOHN :

“I want you to have the old Book. It made us acquainted, and its mission is not yet ended. I want you to open it every day at about two o'clock. That is the hour when we first met. Keep it locked in a safe at all other times. The places at which to open it are the following —”

Then followed a list of two hundred and fifty passages. The letter went on :

“This old Book, by my instructions to you, was strength for your work in the past. Out of it you learned that 'religion is the soul of man seeking the life of God,' a thing you might never have said but for my influence on you. Now, if you will diligently follow my directions about the marked places in the Book, you will, I doubt, add some comfort to your old age.

“I have never paid you the twenty-five hundred dollars I borrowed of you, but as your daughter is married to my grandson, perhaps that will make no great difference.

“My last request to you is that you resign the pastorate of Kir Jear Church. You are fifty-four past; sixty is not far away. The young people are growing restless, even now, for a younger man. You are master yet. Stay so. The only way to stay so is to get out, I doubt. Solomon said many things about

'a time.' 'A time to do this, and a time to do that.' He ought to have said also, 'There is a time for a preacher to quit.' Jack, your time has come. Resign before nine months pass. Go to Grandview; buy the old place and the one each side; buy all the lots from Morningside Terrace clear to the street parallel with the Terrace. Build my girl, the girl I wooed and won for ye, a new, cozy home. Go there, live and be happy. This is for you my last will and testament.

"DAVID HENDERSON."

"P. S.—Do not unwrap the Bible until the day after you read this, at two o'clock, then every day thereafter.

"D. H."

Alice and I laughed over that letter, and she cried a little. The plan was beautiful, but impracticable. To save, in Duqueboro, while pastor of Kir Jear Church, at four thousand dollars salary, enough money to live on without work, was impossible, and to talk about buying and building was absurd. But the dream was beautiful.

Next day at two o'clock, we unwrapped the Book. It was an old worn, Bible, and seemed much thicker as I held it in my hand than it had ever seemed before. To turn to the passage for the first day was the work of a moment. There lay a crisp one thousand dollar bank-note. A slip was pinned to it in David's hand. "Don't be frightened. This is part of your twenty-five hundred, I doubt."

Alice looked at me in blank amazement. "Did ever such a queer man as that live in this world before?" she said.

Next day we had the same experience. Henderson's

note read this time, "This is more of your twenty-five hundred, I doubt."

Again we faced each other, a very astonished pair. The third day revealed the third one thousand dollar bill, but the note pinned to it read:

"You have had your interest regularly for twenty-eight years. This pays the rest of your twenty-five hundred. The extra five hundred are profits on the investment made for you, and held in trust by me.

"D. H."

And now we both comprehended the scheme of the strange Scotchman. For two hundred and fifty days, we found each day a one thousand dollar note. We had promised not to tell anyone for five years. There was no will, no executor, no legacy tax, no fees. There was the money, locked every night in our safe, which was bought before a week went by. There were no more written notes after the third one until the last. Then we found this:

"DEAR JACK:

"This is not a gift, nor charity. Mr. Lorraine and I bought a large tract of land near Galveston, or in that region. It proved to be very productive oil land. The land bought with your twenty-five hundred dollars was rich in oil. I sold it for the money which you have now received. Not a penny is dishonest. Your money earned it all. But you could never have done it, I doubt. You don't know enough. Now resign. Go to Grandview, and do as I told you.

"DAVID HENDERSON."

Alice threw her arms around my neck, and said,

"Will you, Jack? Oh, will you?" And I answered, "Yes, Alice, I will."

* * * * *

That was ten years ago. As I write, Alice sits beyond the table, sewing. It happens that this is Christmas night. We are in our library, which opens on the veranda overlooking the river and mountains, and the moon is almost full. We have had a lovely Christmas day. Ruth and David Ardman, with their two boys, have been with us. The boys are in bed, and Ruth is singing to David, in the parlor. They are almost as devoted lovers as their parents. I am conscious that "age with his stealing steps will claw me in his clutch" ere many years. My hair is about as white as the snow outside. But when I look across the table at Alice, I see in her hair the same color as of the blossom of the smoke-tree by my father's door. The same unruffled look is on her face that was there thirty-five years ago. She is older, but strangers often call her and Ruth sisters; and people still look at her as she passes on Fifth Avenue, as I did once.

"Alice!" She raises her head, and our eyes meet. There is no flash as of cold steel at the bottom of those eyes now.

"What, Jack?" she asks.

"Do you remember that day before Schaus's window, almost forty years ago?"

"Yes, Jack, I remember. But why, dear?"

"You almost broke my heart that day, Alice. For I loved you madly; and though I had no reason, hope had been buoyant until then, that we might meet some day, somewhere, and then —"

"Then what, Jack?"

"Then perhaps I might be able to make you love me a little. But the hope died there on Fifth Avenue."

"It need not have died, my boy, for I loved you then as much as you loved me."

"You have told me that before. But was it true?"

"Yes, Jack, true. It began at old St. David's, and it will never end."

THE END

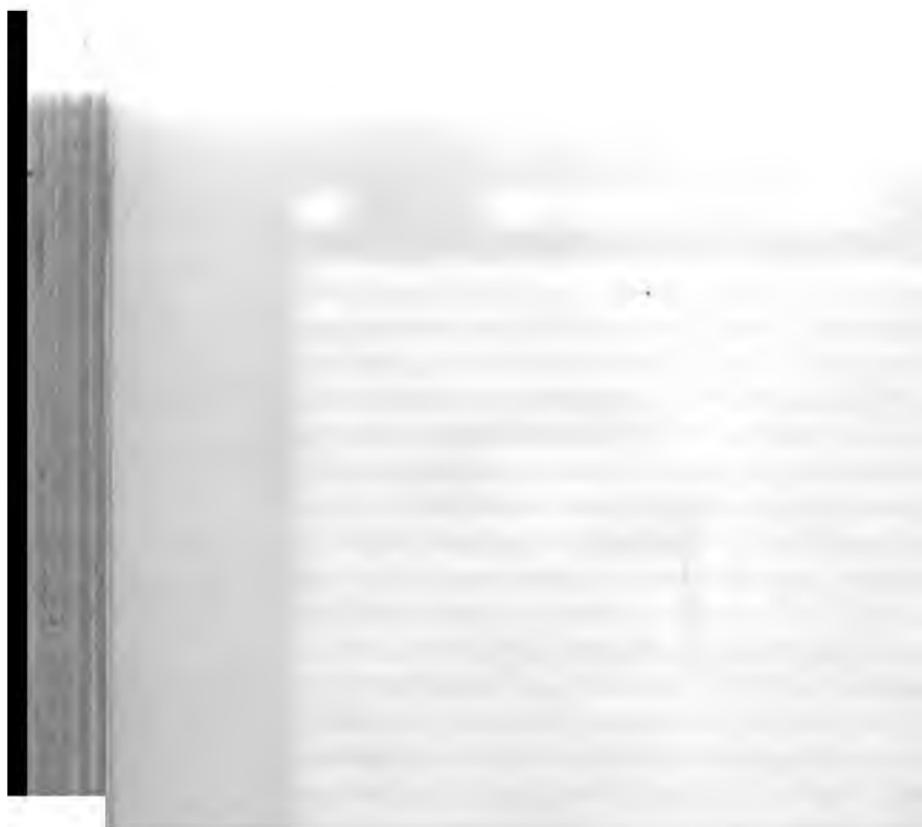


11
12









R 2 - 1941



